Collier's

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CHEAPER FOOD—
Promise or Political Lure?

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NOW MEET ALL 3 NASH AIRFLYTES !

Think of having—in one car—all the flair and fun of a sports convertible, with the comfort, safety and rattle-free rigidity of a sedan—all in an instant's button touch—*and all at the lowest price* of any 5-passenger convertible.

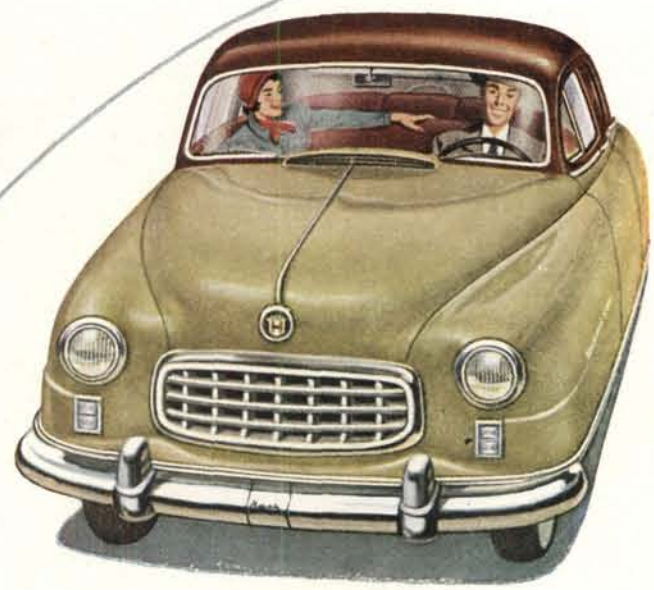
That's the new Nash Rambler Airflyte Convertible Landau!

Think of getting up to 30 miles to a gallon at average highway speed—in a car that's the new star performer—quickest in traffic—*easiest* to handle! That's the new Nash Rambler!

Think of the pride of owning the smartest custom-built convertible in the whole wide world, tailored to your order, complete with Weather Eye Conditioned Air System, radio, and de luxe equipment *at no added cost!*

Don't just read about it. See the new Rambler Airflyte that's got all America talking Nash.

Newest Member of the Nash Airflyte Family — the Rambler Convertible Landau



The Nash Ambassador

The most modern of America's fine cars now offers the last word in automatic transmissions—Hydra-Matic Drive with exclusive Nash Selecto-Lift Starting. You simply lift a lever and *go*—go all day without shifting gears! Its mighty Turbo-head engine delivers America's top high-compression performance (7.3 to 1 ratio) on *regular* gasoline.

Available in both Super and Custom models. Drive the Ambassador, for a complete new picture of fine car luxury and value.

Nash Airflyte

Great Cars Since 1902

Nash Motors, Division Nash-Kelvinator Corporation, Detroit, Michigan

The Nash Statesman

More than 25 miles to the gallon at average highway speed! Like the Nash Ambassador, the Statesman Super and Custom series feature coil-springing on all four wheels . . . Sky-Lounge Safety Interiors with the Airliner Reclining Seat (extra) . . . curved, undivided windshield . . . Twin Beds. Here, too, is America's best aerodynamic design—that cuts the wind with 20.7% less drag than the average car tested, with less fuel cost, wind noise, and fatigue.

All three 1950 Nash cars have the exclusive, priceless advantages of Airflyte Construction . . . with body and frame made one welded super-strong unit, rattle-proof, squeak-proof. Twice as rigid, it stays new years longer . . . contributes to riding smoothness, performance, economy and resale value. See all three great Nash cars at your Nash dealer's now.

There's Much of Tomorrow in all Nash Does Today

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You can be confident that you're keeping your mouth and breath more wholesome—sweeter and cleaner—when you guard against tooth decay and gum troubles *both*.

So don't risk halfway dental care. Depend on *doubly-effective* Ipana care for healthier teeth, healthier gums—better all-around protection for your whole mouth.

Keep your Whole Mouth Wholesome!

"I have confidence in Ipana—Bristol-Myers makes it,"

says Bobbie Snow of Woodside, N. Y.

Bristol-Myers, makers of Ipana Tooth Paste, have worked with leading dental authorities for many years on scientific studies of the teeth and gums. You can use Ipana with complete confidence that it provides effective care for teeth and gums *both*. It's another reliable Bristol-Myers product.

Fight tooth decay and gum troubles with the one leading tooth paste specially designed to do both!*

You want to have a healthier, more wholesome mouth, of course. You *can*—if you follow dentists' advice: fight *gum troubles* as well as tooth decay.

With one famous tooth paste—*with Ipana and massage—you can guard your teeth and gums BOTH.

For no other dentifrice has been proved more effective than Ipana in fighting tooth decay. And no other leading tooth paste is specially designed to stimulate gum circulation—promote healthier gums.

Remember, Ipana is the only leading tooth paste made especially to give you this doubly-protective, doubly-effective care.

So start using Ipana for *double* protection—to help keep your whole mouth wholesome. You'll enjoy that wholesome, refreshing Ipana flavor, too. Get a tube of Ipana Tooth Paste today.

NEW!
Big economy size Ipana saves you up to 23¢

IPANA

For healthier teeth, healthier gums

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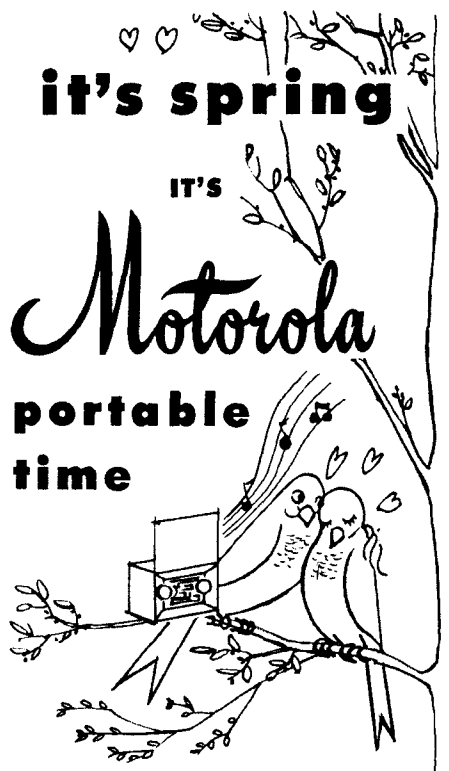
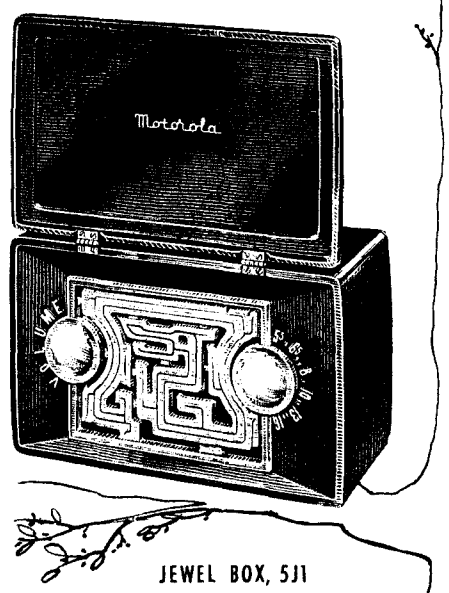
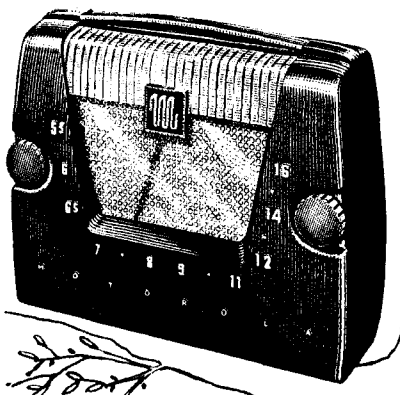




JEWEL BOX, 5J1

Light and small, but it sounds like your living room console! Ultra-smart case of rich jade-green and ebony plastic. Plays outdoors on battery or indoors on house current. Only $29.95 less batteries



TOWN & COUNTRY, 6L1

Sounds like a million . . . even where others fail completely! A slim, trim beauty with easy-to-read "sweep station" dial. AC/DC or battery operation. If you want the very best, here's your radio! $39.95 less batteries

See—Hear them at your dealer today!

Motorola PORTABLES

Prices higher in South and West—subject to change

20 YEARS OF ELECTRONIC ACHIEVEMENTS
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May 13, 1950

ARTICLES

Cheaper Food—Promise or Political Lure? . . . . ALLAN B. KLINE 13
Last of the Great Mail Robbers . . . . . ALAN HYND 16
Somebody Always Going Away . . . . . MARION HARGROVE 20
Fadeout . . . . . BUDD SCHULBERG 24
(Concluding THE MIKE JACOBS STORY)
The Man Who Comes to Breakfast . . . . . ROBERT FROMAN 28
Test Pilot for Our New A-Bomb . . . . . RICHARD WITKIN 32

FICTION

To the Future . . . . . RAY BRADBURY 14
Secret of Coon Castle . . . . . PAUL ANNIXTER 18
The Schoolmistress . . . . . ALEC WAUGH 22
When You Come Home . . . . . WILLIAM R. SCOTT 26
(PART THREE OF FOUR PARTS)
The Last Souvenir . . . . . LESTER ATWELL 30
Maid's Service . . . . . NORD RILEY 62
(THE SHORT SHORT STORY)

Keep Up with the World . . . . . FRELING FOSTER 8
That Old Corral in the Juke Box . . . . . GLYNN HARVEY 10
Editorials 78
Cover . . . . . JACK HEARNE

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The Cover

Brigantines, and the use of a "stunsail" (the length of canvas that's beginning to get away from the sailors), are rare these days, so Artist Jack Hearne has brought them back for you. To help the composition he turned one man so he faces into the wind (a dangerous practice), and the stunsail is a little longer than it might be (to give a greater feeling of motion), but Mr. Hearne will stand up to the experts when it comes to the other details in the picture.

Week's Mail

Franco's Friends & Foes

EDITOR: Your Franco editorial was mighty choice (Lest We Forget, March 25th). I remember too well a sparkling day in August, 1943, when as a G.I. passenger aboard a British troopship I sailed past Gibraltar en route to Bizerte.

At dusk, two German torpedo planes slipped into a long glide off our portside, zeroed in on a Navy aircraft carrier astern. When the smoke cleared, the dark waters of the Mediterranean were closing over the shattered remains of one plane while the other became a fast-disappearing speck in the distant *Spanish* sunset.

Lest we forget is right!

BLAINE S. RICE, Holyoke, Mass.

. . . May I as a reader, and in the name of many of the readers of the paper I represent, protest with indignation against your vicious attack on Spain and its leader, General Franco?

Last month I visited five European countries including Spain. In the latter country I observed progress on a large scale and a degree of liberty which I did not expect, due to listening to the anti-Spanish propagandists in this country.

I found the government strong, the people united and with a deep regard for the United States.

PATRICK F. SCANLAN, Managing Editor,
The Tablet, Brooklyn, N. Y.

. . . Congratulations on your sensible, simple, and literate Franco editorial. What a pleasure to read such measured, cool sanity on a pressing public question.

LEWIS THOMPSON, New York, N. Y.

. . . Collier's lines up with the Communists to vilify Franco and insult a friendly nation.

No matter if it be Franco or the man's religion that inspired the insidious and cowardly attack, to be guilty of intolerance, bigotry or Communism is despicable and loathed by good citizens everywhere.

J. E. BUSTARD, Vallejo, Cal.

. . . This is a large cheer for your editorial Lest We Forget. There has been so much nonsensical talk about Franco in recent years that it is marvelous to see a publication of Collier's stature coming out and telling forgotten truths about him.

That you illustrated it with so brilliant a Covarrubias cartoon is an added delight.

MILDRED ADAMS, New York, N. Y.

. . . Your editorial on Franco must have been written with venom. It is the most contemptible piece of bias borrowed from the Daily Worker I have ever read.

You probably don't know or care that General Franco is a good Catholic and could never do the deeds you attribute to him, which are lies most likely.

JULIA GANSSLE, Brooklyn, N. Y.

. . . Please accept my humble thanks for a wonderful editorial.

It puts my mind to rest when I realize that I am not alone in remembering the horror

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What to do . . . and what NOT to do . . . for

MORE AND MORE PEOPLE are learning not to take a chance with a persistent stomach-ache or pain in the abdomen. As it might be appendicitis, *they call a physician at once!*

Aided by advances in medical science, the mortality rate from appendicitis has declined steadily every year for the past 12 years. Today, the removal of the appendix is a relatively simple and safe operation. The sulfa drugs and penicillin have also helped reduce deaths from appendicitis through prevention and control of complications which sometimes accompany the disease.

Prompt medical attention, however, is still the most important single step to complete recovery. For example, recent studies showed that when operations were performed within 24 hours after the first sign of an attack, more than 99 per cent of the patients recovered.

The Doctor says:

1. Appendicitis generally gives adequate warning—pain in the abdomen, sometimes accompanied by nausea, and usually settling after a time in the lower right side. Since the symptoms are not always the same, the wisest rule is: *Call the doctor at once for any persistent pain in the abdomen.*

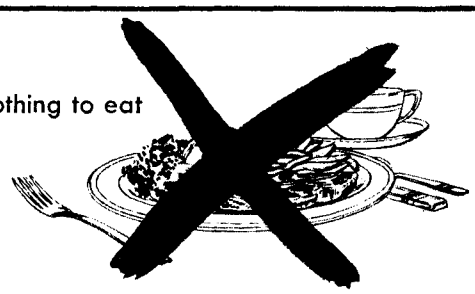
Just lie quietly...

2. If appendicitis is suspected, serious complications can often be avoided by keeping the patient quiet, lying down if possible, until the doctor comes. Sometimes the pain may lessen or vanish, but this is no sign that danger is past. Only a doctor, using a blood count or other tests, can determine if appendicitis is present.

No medicines...

3. The use of laxatives, enemas, or any external pressure, may cause the appendix to rupture, thus spreading the infection. That is why it is always safest not to give the patient any home remedies or medicines, and to avoid rubbing or pressing the area which is painful.

and Nothing to eat

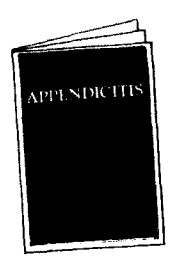


4. Food and liquids put an extra strain on an inflamed appendix and may also cause it to burst. So, the patient should not have anything to eat or drink, until the doctor has made an examination.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
1 Madison Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

To learn more about this condition, send for Metropolitan's free booklet, 60C, entitled, "Appendicitis."



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It's Wise to Smoke
FATIMA
is the long cigarette which contains the finest Turkish and Domestic tobaccos superbly blended to make Fatima EXTRA-MILD.
FATIMA gives smokers a MUCH DIFFERENT, MUCH BETTER FLAVOR AND AROMA.
COAST-TO-COAST FATIMA HAS DOUBLED ITS SMOKERS
ENJOY FATIMA YOURSELF
... BEST OF ALL LONG CIGARETTES

of the last war and the part Generalissimo Franco played in it. MRS. MARK BASUK

. . . The editorial and cartoon on Franco was very, very insulting. Franco was one guy that licked the pants off of Joe Stalin, but not till after 5,500 priests were killed.

Are you a little Communistic or anti-Catholic?

REV. PAUL M. GILMORE, Chicago, Ill.

Our Point Is Political

Collier's regrets that some readers seem to have misinterpreted the editorial on Franco and discovered connotations that were neither present nor intended.

The suggestion that Collier's is "Communistic" or that the editorial was Communist-inspired is too ridiculous, of course, to merit serious consideration. In the past two years this magazine has published more than 50 articles and editorials which reported or commented on the dangers of Communism in this country and throughout the world. Among them were Brigadier General Frank Howley's series, My 4-Year War with the Reds; Louis Budenz' The Menace of Red China; Crack-up of an American Communist Family; and Labor Should Clean House.

A "Communist" publication would scarcely have printed two articles by Senator Robert A. Taft which appeared recently in Collier's: How Much Government Can Free Enterprise Stand? and Is President Truman Taking Us Down the British Road?

The suggestion that Collier's is anti-Catholic is just as baseless. To those who made the suggestion, we cite the 15 articles by Francis Cardinal Spellman which Collier's has published; Unholy Crusade, the story of Communist persecution of Czechoslovakia's Catholics, by Joseph Wechsberg, and the article on the 1950 holy year titled Year of Jubilee, which, with its accompanying full-page color photograph of Pope Pius XII, appeared in our 1949 Christmas issue.

A few readers have also questioned the truth of the three examples of Franco's wartime aid to the Axis which were included in the editorial.

These were the accounts of experienced, accurate newspapermen (on combat duty during the war) who are close and trustworthy acquaintances of the writer of the editorial, and who either saw the incidents described or, in the case of the Italian who radioed information on Allied ships at Gibraltar, took the story from the official record as told by the man himself.

These events took place and their stories were told long before the issue of ambassadors or loans to Spain was even thought of.

Take It Away, Gene Fowler

EDITOR: The board of directors of this club has directed that I write you with reference to the story of Damon Runyon by Gene Fowler (Here's to Damon Runyon, March 11th). The cut line under the picture of Jim Wong is in the wrong tense. The picture did hang in the Denver Press Club until a recent visit by Mr. Fowler. And he had better return it! DAVID BROFMAN,
The Denver Press Club, Denver, Colo.

That Portside Plow

EDITOR: For the information of puzzled Messrs. Burkhalter and Peterson (Week's Mail, March 25th), that Amish plow is not "left-handed." It is known technically as a one-way plow—so called, I suppose, because it works two ways!

With an ordinary horse-drawn plow, you must go continuously round and round the outside of a "land," ending up with a dead furrow in the center. This is fine for Iowa, but difficult on hillside land and impossible if it is very steep.

With the one-way you plow along a hill contourwise, throwing the cut downhill. When you reach the end, you turn the team right back into the same furrow. As the plow swings around, you kick loose a toggle, lift up the handles, give a sideway heave, and the whole cutting assembly swings under and up, clicking into place on the other side of the fixed metal shoe or center, which is known as the "land side."

These plows are not peculiar to the Amish. I saw my grandfather use one years ago in western Pennsylvania. Your correspondence about them took my thoughts back to my boyhood, and I couldn't resist sounding off.

RALPH BRADFORD, Washington, D. C.

The city slickers at Collier's thank Mr. Bradford and 30 other farmers, past or present, who wrote in to set us and Messrs. Burkhalter and Peterson right on the subject of left-handed plows.

Grammar Lesson for Mr. S.

EDITOR: Your publication of Robert E. Sherwood's letter (Week's Mail, March 11th) certainly needed further "ghosting."

If there were a "grammatical ghost," he would surely advise Mr. Sherwood of his necessity to change the sentence: "And even if I was not hired—" etc.

Surely you'll agree it should read: "And even if I *were* not hired."

RHODA ROYAL, New York

. . . No, we're inclined to agree with Mr. Sherwood and with the statement in H. W. Fowler's Modern English Usage that the subjunctive "is moribund except in a few easily specified cases." We feel safe in saying that Mr. Sherwood's choice of words was deliberate—not ignorant.

Devaluated Pounds

EDITOR: In The Tax Collector's Lot (March 18th), I read that someone tendered 80 pounds of pennies in payment of a $70 account.

The tax collector has no justified complaint, inasmuch as he was considerably overpaid, unless he gave the payer some change. Down in Texas 48 pounds of pennies (one-cent pieces) equal approximately $70. HAROLD S. PAISLEY, Italy, Texas

. . . The party from White Sulphur Springs who sent the tax collector 80 pounds of pennies in payment of a $70 tax bill is by all means due a refund from Uncle Sam.

In one ounce of pennies there are nine cents. This makes $1.44 a pound. Eighty pounds of pennies would be $115.20. Am I correct? ROBERT T. BURR, Dallas, Texas

Texas readers Paisley and Burr are within 1 5/6 cents of agreement. We hope the White Sulphur Springs taxpayer got his refund.

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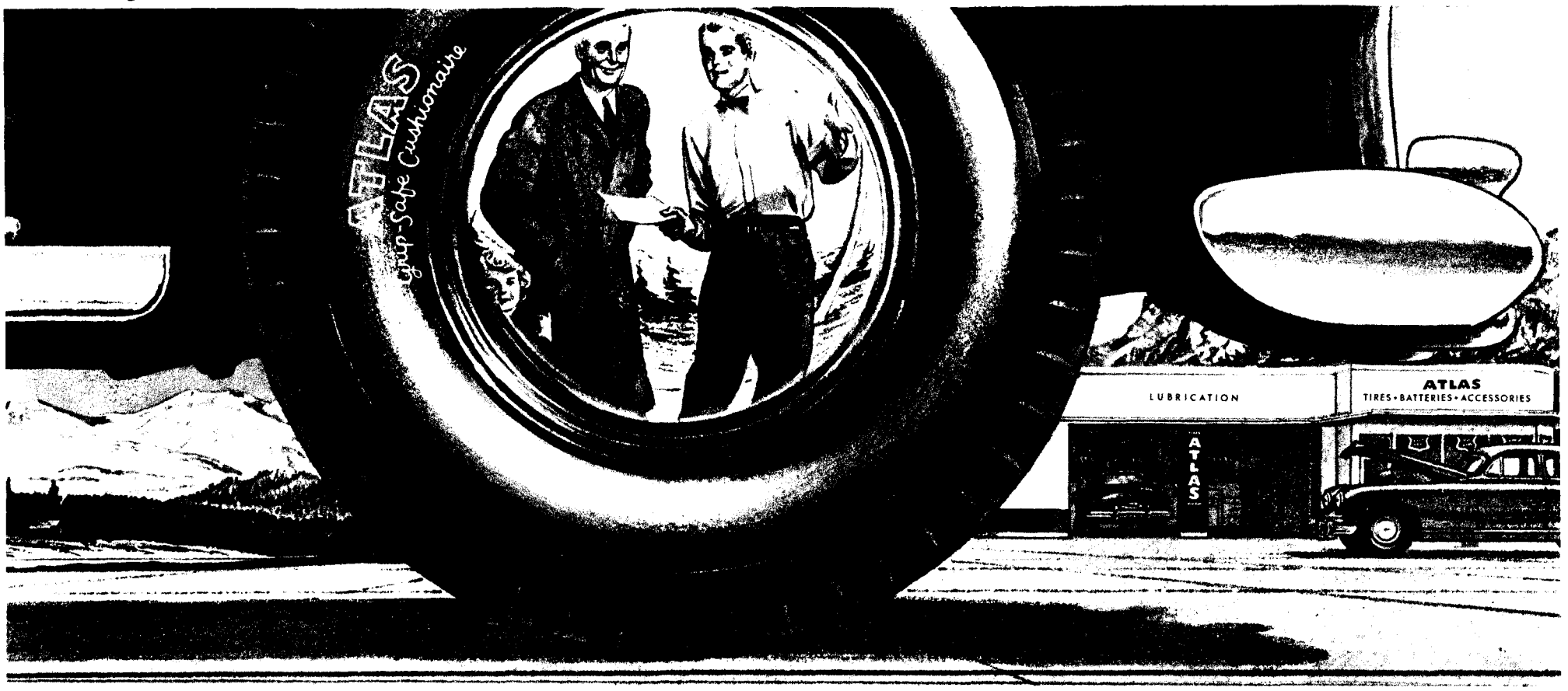
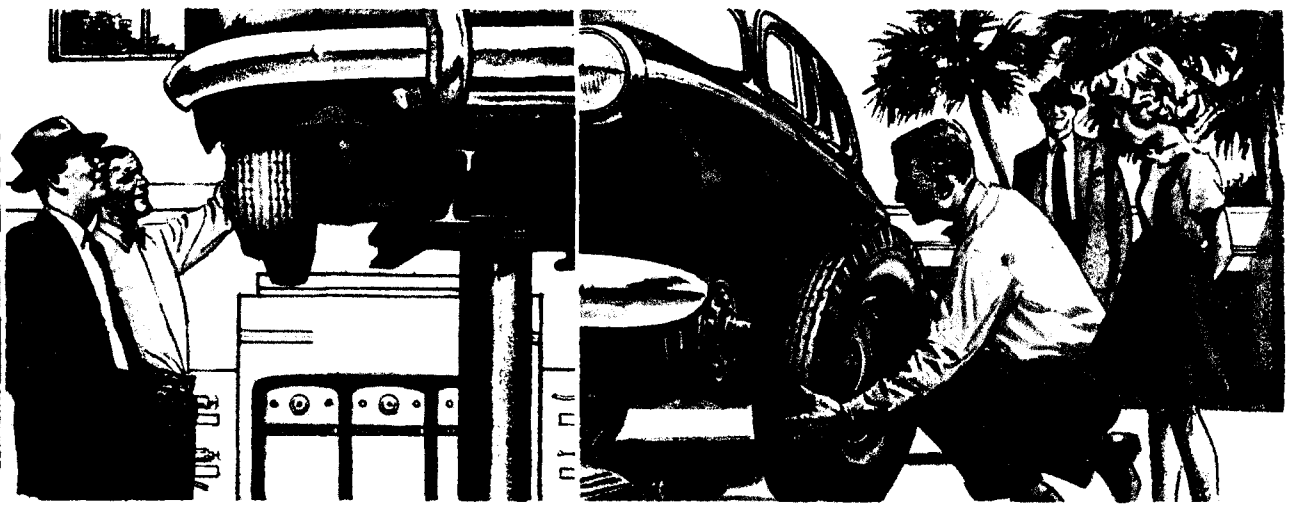
Why the Warranty on Atlas Tires is Different



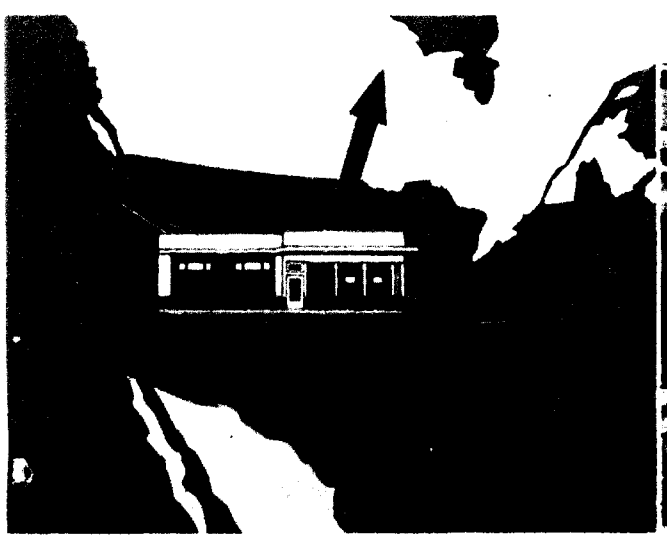
1. When you buy a tire, you naturally expect it to be warranted against defective materials and workmanship for its entire life. You get this protection with an Atlas tire, of course. And—in addition—you get a great deal more . . .

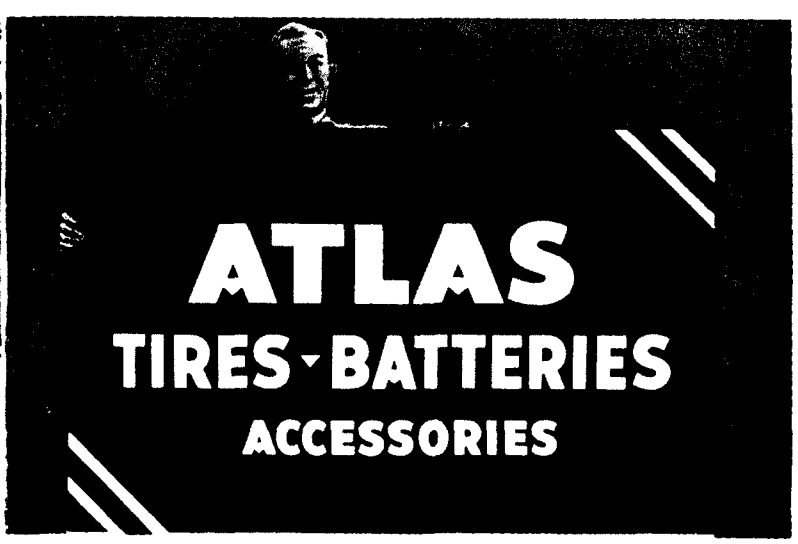


2. With each Atlas tire, you get a written Warranty that your tire will render service for a definite minimum period of time.

3. If your tire fails—or wears out—within that time you will get a liberal adjustment.

4. If the adjustment involves replacement of the tire, you'll be credited for the time remaining in the Warranty.





5. This service is available to you through 38,000 Atlas dealers in 48 States and Canada.

6. Any Atlas dealer is authorized to make on-the-spot adjustments. There is no waiting—no quibbling.

7. Get a set of Atlas tires—with the Warranty—today. At your local Atlas dealer.

Good for your car...wherever you are

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FOR BEST RESULTS:

shave with **Barbasol**

No brush
No lather
No rub-in

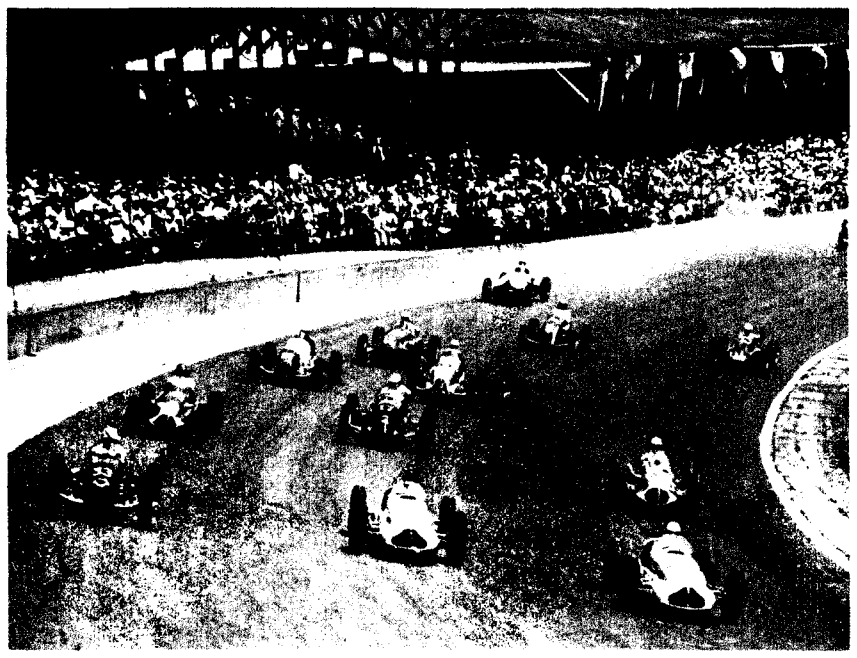
If you're aiming for closer, smoother, more *comfortable* shaves that last all day—try Barbasol! Barbasol's special ingredients wilt whiskers fast so your razor really *whizzes* through them—quick and clean as an arrow. No but's about it, Barbasol shaves *look* good and they *feel* good. And Barbasol *is* good for your skin—never dries it out, as soapy lathers do. It's a bull's-eye in shaving comfort *every time*, when you shave with—BARBASOL!

Use it also for soothing relief of sunburn, windburn, insect bites and itching.

Avoid Athletic Aroma use BARZ Lotion Deodorant

Keep Up with the World

BY FRELING FOSTER



Their cramped hands have to be pried loose from the wheels

During grueling automobile races like the 500-mile Memorial Day classic at the Indianapolis Speedway, the drivers have to grasp the steering wheel so tightly for such a long period that the majority who finish are unable to open their cramped hands and their fingers have to be pried loose by assistants.

A peculiar belief was held by religious persons in certain Christian countries, notably Scotland, in the eighteenth century. It was that ejaculatory prayers were more successful than long prayers as they were spoken so suddenly and unexpectedly that Satan was unable to intercept them; and therefore, these individuals would frequently interject, even in business conversations, such exclamations as *Lord help us, Forgive us our debts,* and *Deliver us from evil.*

A bomb that had a singular history was thrown in Haymarket Square, Chicago, during an outdoor labor meeting on the night of May 4, 1886, and set off a riot in which some 20 policemen and workers were killed and 250 others were injured. The incident created great bitterness between capital and labor; and it was also responsible for the campaign of hatred that was shortly directed against unions and retarded their progress for a decade. Yet the identity of the man who threw the famous bomb was never learned. Incidentally, this case was the first in the United States in which dynamite was employed as a weapon of death.

A swindle worked on a wealthy widow in Wyoming years ago revealed that she was gullible to an unbelievable degree. On the pretense of talking business, one crook took the woman to a restaurant where, under their table, he "found" a wallet filled with new $100 bills and letters written to a Professor Brown by men in high government positions. Within a minute, Brown (the accomplice) rushed in, received his lost wallet, promised the couple a large reward and sat down with them. After wining and dining the widow many times, Brown told her confidentially about his work. Two Washington officials would often have thousands of $100 bills secretly printed by a friend in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. To avoid suspicion, they would send the new money to Brown and he would exchange it for old currency at a considerable discount. So the woman walked into the trap and gave Brown $35,000 in used bills for a package of $100,000 in fresh money. As advised by the swindler, the trusting widow waited until she arrived home to open the parcel which contained only pieces of newspaper.

Without doubt, the most gullible monarch of modern times was Abdul-Aziz IV, who became acting Sultan of Morocco in 1900 at the age of twenty and reigned until 1908 when he was deposed because his incredible extravagances had depleted the treasury of his country. Several years later he learned, much to his astonishment, that diamond necklaces, grand pianos and motorcars did not have to be purchased by the dozen.

At about seven o'clock one evening in 1890 in London, a jealous husband we shall call "Rex Lynn" stabbed and killed his wife in their small flat, as he had long planned, because she was having an affair with a "Fred Cole" and would not stop seeing him. To commit the crime so Cole would be accused of it, Lynn had obtained and used Cole's dagger, and left it at the scene with one of Cole's initialed handkerchiefs and several butts of his special cigarettes. Within an hour, a caller discovered the body and, before midnight, Lynn was arrested by Scotland Yard and taken home. Upon seeing the "clues," he asked why Cole had not been arrested—and was informed by the detectives that they *had* seen the man and that he had a perfect alibi. Early that afternoon, many hours before the murder had been committed, Fred Cole had dropped dead.

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That Old Corral in the Juke Box

The rumba bands have been replaced by something worse

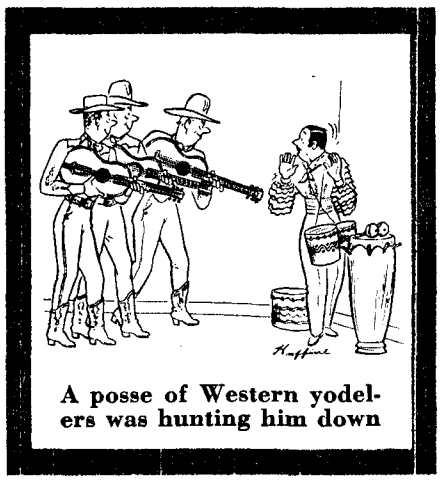
By GLYNN HARVEY

A FEW months ago, while everybody was scurrying around trying to unload their old 1949 atom bombs, the last of the imported rumba bands slipped unnoticed out of the port of Miami bound home to Brazil.

The passing of another musical era was marked only by the farewell message of José Minestrone, an artist on the gourds, who mournfully told a reporter for the Miami Herald:

"*Sí*, podner, we're rahdin' daown the stardust trail to that old corral in the sky . . ."

Translating freely from the Portuguese, what José meant was: "The radio and recording studios are getting so cluttered up with git-tar wranglers that we can't even beat a path up to a microphone with cast-iron maracas."



A posse of Western yodelers was hunting him down

The same day that local admirers of the Marshall Plan were adapting it to their own needs at Mr. Brink's Boston outlet, and generally overlooked in the hue and cry that followed, there was a wild report that a die-hard Venezuelan drum thumper was still skulking about in the bowels of New York's Radio City. But a posse of Western yodelers was hunting him down and, at last reports, had him cornered behind a four-card straight in the announcers' lounge.

Meantime, it has become increasingly difficult to find an open microphone that isn't being pelted with nasal vowels by a disciple of the no-necktie cult, rahdin' hell-fer-leather fer that old corral in the sky, to the plunking accompaniment of a git-tar.

Incidentally, the git-tar must never be confused with a guitar. The latter is a musical instrument; the git-tar plays only dominant, subdominant, diminished fifth and seventh chords. Daown around Crossville, Tennessee, they still talk about Dogtrot Deekin, the git-tar player who slipped a tricky little augmented fifth into the Milky Way Ranch-Hand and was promptly sent down to the North Carolina Folk Festival for further seasoning.

Naturally, this jamming of the juke boxes by the hillbillies is a matter of grave concern to us music lovers. Brahms O'Toole, whose arrangement of Finlandia for triangle and Boy Scout bugle created quite a ripple of apathy in the prewar musical world, has locked up his manuscript paper. "Hoagy" Beethoven, the Portland, Maine, prodigy who gave us those fugues for the police whistle, has entered a monastery.

Of greater concern is the manner in which the hillbillies and song wranglers suddenly, and mysteriously, seized control of the recording industry. It was a bloodless coup, if I ever saw one—and I never saw one. One day we're locked in mortal combat with hip-tossing Latins. The next, we're standing there, holding a couple of unoccupied fiesta blouses and looking blankly at one another. And every loudspeaker in the land is crowded with unhappy cowpokes who either (a) can't get to first mesa with his prairie chicken, or (b) has come to the conclusion that he never will and consequently is moodily rahdin' up the golden trail to that old you-know-what in the you-know-where.

It was the neatest piece of claim jumping since the Austrian *Anschluss*. And you can't tell me that the fix wasn't in.

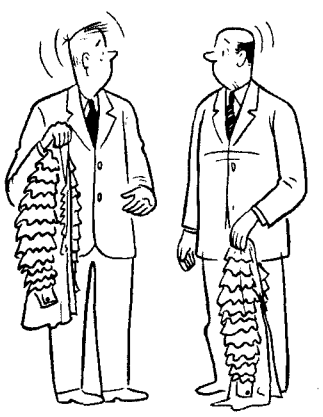
Those plowboys and ranch-house Rosies must have been laying low since the fall of Berlin, hemming their suède skirts and piling up a backlog of barnyard ballads for *der Tag*.

But they must have rehearsed, if at all, through the years, in the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. There simply aren't enough hills in the United States to conceal anything as monstrous as this latest musical scourge.

Yet it might have been anticipated and headed off if America had listened to Andante Allegretta, the tonal scientist who, in 1934, was ignored when he advanced his Allegrettan Theory of Recurrent Assonance. Andy predicted, almost to the month and the day, the resurgence of Dixieland jazz, the appearance of bebop, and the reincarnation of bunkhouse balladry.

According to the Allegrettan theory, the old corral in the sky will become overcast and dissolve into the mists about midsummer of this year. It will be followed, he says, by the return of the stomp and the drag.

If there's anybody in the house who can sing a passable baritone to If You Knew Susie, I'll meet him in the smokehouse after lunch. No git-tars, please. THE END



We're holding a couple of unoccupied fiesta blouses

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"ANNIE GET YOUR GUN"

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"There's No Business Like Show Business"
"My Defenses Are Down"
"I'm An Indian Too"
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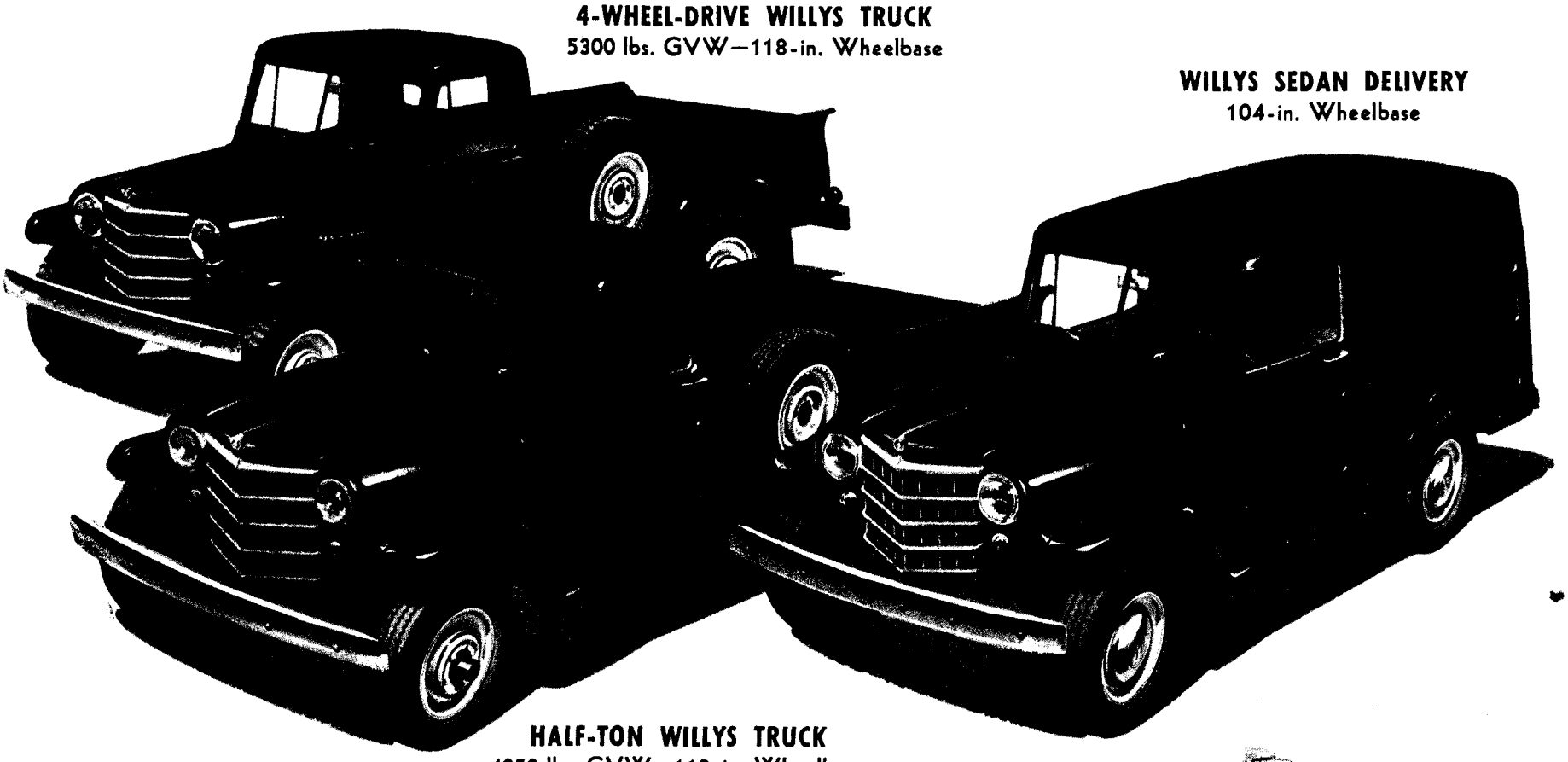

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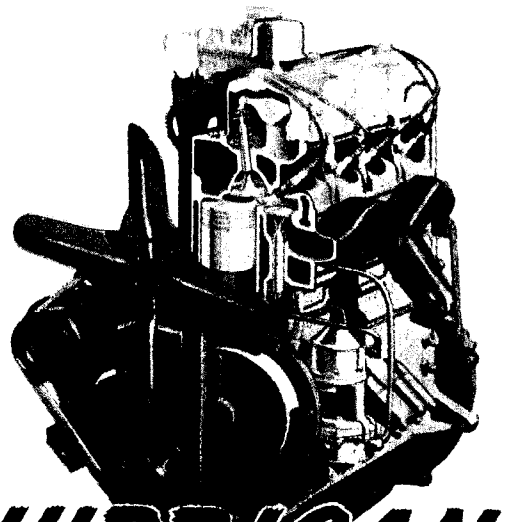
Inspect them top to bottom—comfortable, wide-vision cabs—low-maintenance functional bodies—sturdy frames—rugged construction that has made Willys vehicles world-famous for long service.



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Collier's, May 13, 1950

CHEAPER FOOD—
Promise or Political Lure?

Spring has come again, and plows are turning the rich soil of the uplands, the bottom country and the prairies. And, once again, the nation is in the midst of debate over a strange and great problem—the problem of plenty. President Truman has renewed his demand that Congress forthwith pass the Brannan Plan which the Administration holds is the answer to the question of what to do with surpluses.

Few proposed government programs have generated as much heat as the Brannan Plan. First put forth more than a year ago, it remains a fixed objective of the Administration, and, as such, it holds increasing significance not only for the farmers it would directly affect but for everyone interested in the price of food, which means most of us. It will be a crucial issue in many primaries in the coming months.

In the issue of July 2, 1949, Collier's reported on the controversial plan's author, Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan, and why he believes his plan is in the best national interest. Here is presented a diametrically opposed view by a man eminently qualified to state it: Allan B. Kline, president of the powerful American Farm Bureau Federation, representing 1,409,000 U.S. farm families. Among farm spokesmen, Kline is outstanding for a working philosophy that farm problems cannot be solved on a basis of narrow self-interest, but must be related to the problems of nonfarm people. —THE EDITOR

By ALLAN B. KLINE

IF THE American people want to keep on getting plenty of good food at fair prices, they should not swallow the sugar-coated pill known as the Brannan Plan. This plan, if adopted, would be a raw deal for farmers and consumers alike. It won't stand the test of analysis. It won't give us cheap food.

The way to continue getting adequate supplies of good food at reasonable prices lies in high production per farmer and steadily increasing efficiency in farm production.

This has been our way up to now, and it is a way of progress. In 1850 the average American farm worker produced enough food for five people; in 1920, enough for 10, and by 1945 for 15. Common sense dictates that we should improve on our past successes, not take an entirely different course. The course being charted for us by Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan would beeline the farmers of this country in the direction of stabilized poverty.

Few consumers are aware of some significant Bureau of Labor Statistics figures which show that the prices they pay for food, when measured in the length of time they have to work to purchase that food, are lower than in any other major country. To earn enough to buy a pound of butter, the average American works 32 minutes, the Canadian, 45 minutes, the Frenchman, 146 minutes, and the Russian, 542 minutes. To earn enough to buy a pound of ham, an *(Continued on page 50)*

G. AND M. HEILMAN

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This man and his wife are in mortal terror. They are being searched out by men from another world. The Searchers want them to return

By RAY BRADBURY

THE fireworks sizzled across the cool-tiled square, banged against adobe café walls, then rushed on hot wires to bash the high church tower, while a fiery bull ran about the plaza chasing boys and laughing men. It was a spring night in Mexico in the year 1938.

Mr. and Mrs. William Travis stood on the edge of the yelling crowd, smiling. The bull charged. Ducking, the man and wife ran, fire pelting them, past the brass band that pulsed out vast rhythms of La Paloma. The bull passed, a framework of bamboo and gunpowder, carried lightly on the shoulders of a charging Mexican.

"I've never enjoyed myself so much in my life," gasped Susan Travis, stopping.

"It's terrific," said William.

"It will go on, won't it? I mean our trip?"

He patted his breast pocket. "I've enough traveler's checks for a lifetime. Enjoy yourself. Forget it. They'll never find us."

"Never?"

Now someone hurled giant firecrackers from the bell tower.

The bull was dead. The Mexican lifted its framework from his shoulders. Children clustered to touch the magnificent papier-mâché animal.

"Let's examine the bull," said William.

As they walked past the café entrance, Susan saw the strange man looking out at them, a white man in a white suit, with a thin, sunburned face. His eyes coldly watched them as they walked.

She would never have noticed him if it had not been for the bottles at his immaculate elbow; a fat bottle of crème de menthe, a clear bottle of vermouth, a flagon of cognac, and seven other bottles of assorted liqueurs, and, at his fingertips, ten small half-filled glasses from which, without taking his eyes off the street, he sipped, occasionally squinting, pressing his thin mouth shut upon the savor. In his free hand a thin Havana cigar smoked, and on a chair stood twenty cartons of Turkish cigarettes, six boxes of cigars and some packaged colognes.

"Bill—" whispered Susan.

"Take it easy," William said. "That man's nobody."

"I saw him in the plaza this morning."

"Don't look back, keep walking, examine the papier-mâché bull—here, that's it, ask questions."

"Do you think he's from the Searchers?"

"They *couldn't* follow us!"

"They might!"

"What a nice bull," said William to the man who owned it.

"He couldn't have followed us back through two hundred years, could he?"

"Watch yourself!" said William.

She swayed. He crushed her elbow tightly, steering her away.

"Don't faint." He smiled, to make it look good. "You'll be all right. Let's go right in that café, drink in front of him, so if he *is* what we think he is, he won't suspect."

"No, I couldn't."

"We've *got* to—come on now. And so I said to David, that's *ridiculous!*" He spoke this last in a loud voice as they went up the café steps.

We are here, thought Susan. Who are we? Where are we going? What do we fear? Start at the beginning, she told herself, holding to her sanity, as she felt the adobe floor underfoot.

My name is Ann Kristen, my husband's name is Roger, we were born in the year 2155 A.D. And we lived in a world that was evil. A world that was like a great ship pulling away from the shore of sanity and civilization, roaring its black horn in the night, taking two billion people with it, whether they wanted to go or not, to death, to fall over the edge

She had read the metal foil advertisement and thought: this is our chance to escape

of the earth and the sea into radioactive flame and madness.

They walked into the café. The man was staring at them. A phone rang.

The phone startled Susan. She remembered a phone ringing two hundred years in the future, on that blue April morning in 2155, and herself answering it:

"Ann, this is René! Have you heard? I mean about Travel In Time, Incorporated? Trips to Rome in 21 B.C., trips to Napoleon's Waterloo, any time, anyplace!"

"René, you're joking."

"No. Clinton Smith left this morning for Philadelphia in 1776. Travel In Time, Inc., arranges everything. Costs money. But *think*, to actually *see* the burning of Rome, to see Kublai Khan, Moses and the Red Sea! You've probably got an ad in your tube-mail now."

She had opened the suction mail-tube and there was the metal foil advertisement:

ROME AND THE BORGIAS!
THE WRIGHT BROTHERS AT KITTY HAWK!
Travel In Time, Inc., can costume you, put you in a crowd during the assassination of Lincoln or Caesar! We guarantee to teach you any language you need to move freely in any civilization, in any year, without friction. Latin, Greek, ancient American colloquial. Take your vacation in *Time* as well as Place!

René's voice was buzzing on the phone. "Tom and I leave for 1492 tomorrow. They're arranging for Tom to sail with Columbus—isn't it amazing?"

"Yes," murmured Ann, stunned. "What does the government say about this Time Machine Company?"

"Oh, the police have an eye on it. Afraid people might evade the draft, run off and hide in the Past. Everyone has to leave a security bond behind, his house and belongings, to guarantee return. After all, the war's on."

"Yes, the war," murmured Ann. "The war."

Standing there, holding the phone, she had thought: Here is the chance my husband and I have talked and prayed over for so many years. We don't like this world of 2155. We want to run away from his work at the bomb factory—from my position with disease-culture units. Perhaps there is some chance for us, to escape, to run for centuries into a wild country of years where they will never find us and bring us back to burn our books, censor our thoughts, scald our minds with fear, march us, scream at us with radios . . .

The phone rang.

They were in Mexico in the year 1938.

She looked at the stained café wall.

Good workers for the Future State were allowed vacations into the Past to escape fatigue. And so she and her husband had moved back into 1938. They took a room in New York City, and enjoyed the theaters and the Statue of Liberty which still stood green in the harbor. And on the third day, they had changed their clothes and their names, and flown off to hide in Mexico.

"It *must* be him," whispered Susan, looking at the stranger seated at the table. "Those cigarettes, the cigars, the liquor. They give him away. Remember *our* first night in the Past?"

A MONTH ago, on their first night in New York, before their flight, they had tasted all the strange drinks, bought odd foods, perfumes, cigarettes of ten dozen rare brands, for they were scarce in the Future, where war was everything. So they had made fools of themselves, rushing in and out of stores, salons, tobacconists', going up to their room to get wonderfully ill.

And now here was this stranger, doing likewise, doing a thing that only a man from the Future would do, who had been starved for liquors and cigarettes too many years.

Susan and William sat and ordered a drink.

The stranger was examining their clothes, their hair, their jewelry, the way they walked and sat.

"Sit easily," said William under his breath. "Look as if you've worn this clothing style all your life."

"We should never have tried to escape."

"My God," said William. "He's coming over. Let me do the talking."

The stranger bowed before them. There was the faintest tap of heels knocking together. Susan stiffened. That military sound—unmistakable as that certain ugly rap on your door at midnight.

"Mr. Kristen," said the stranger, "you did not pull up your pant legs when you sat down."

William froze. He looked at his hands lying on either leg, innocently. Susan's heart was beating swiftly.

"You've got the wrong person," said William, quickly. "My name's not Krisler."

"Kris*ten*," corrected the stranger.

"I'm William Travis," said William. "And I don't see what my pant legs have to do with you."

"Sorry." The stranger pulled up a chair. "Let us say I thought I knew you because you did *not* pull your trousers up. Everyone does. If they don't the trousers bag quickly. I am a long way from home, Mr.—Travis—and in need of company. My name is Simms."

"Mr. Simms, we appreciate your loneliness, but we're tired. We're leaving for Acapulco tomorrow."

"A charming spot. I was just there, looking for some friends of mine. They are somewhere. I shall find them yet. Oh, is the lady a bit sick?"

"Good night, Mr. Simms."

They started out the *(Continued on page 58)*

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM HALL

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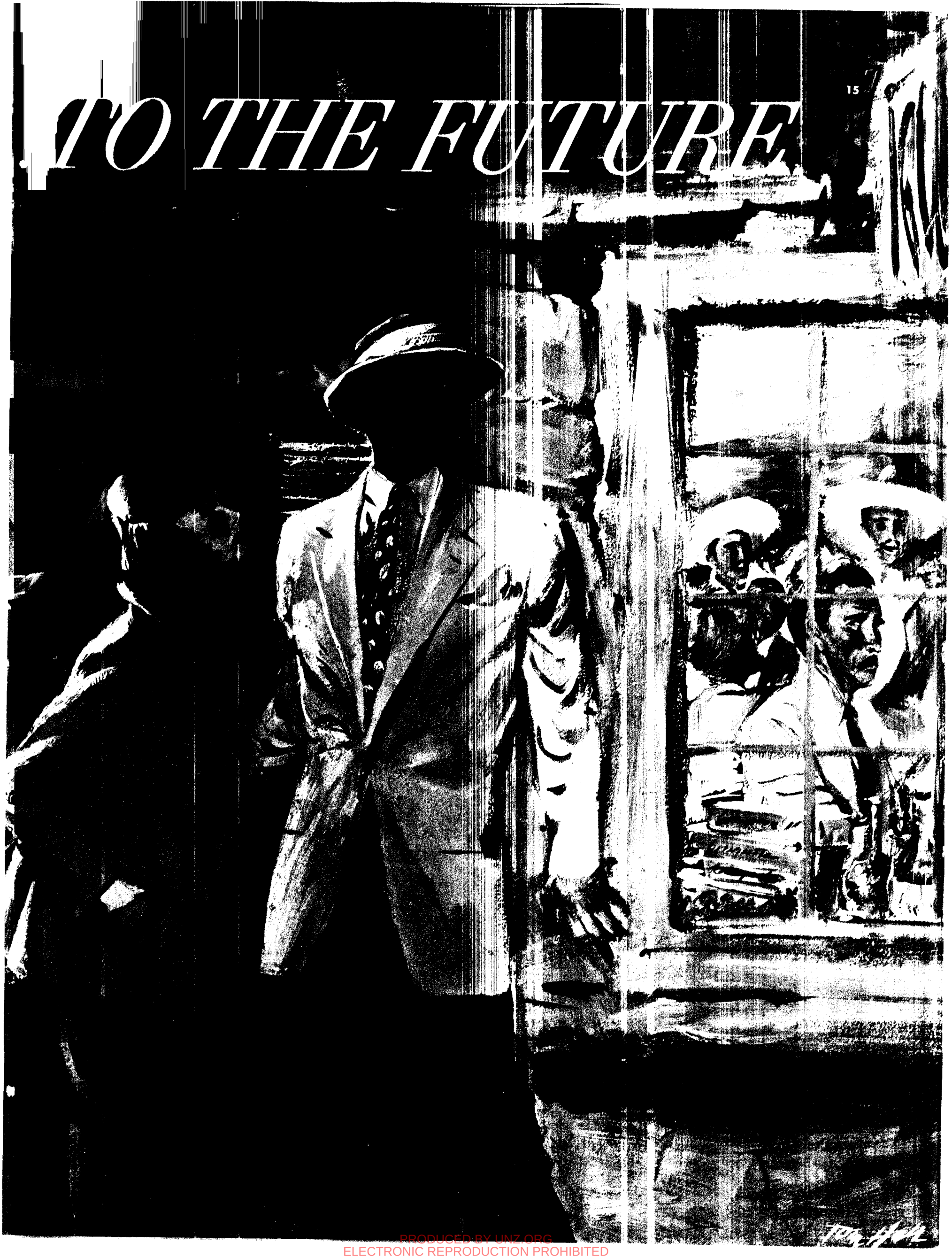
TO THE FUTURE



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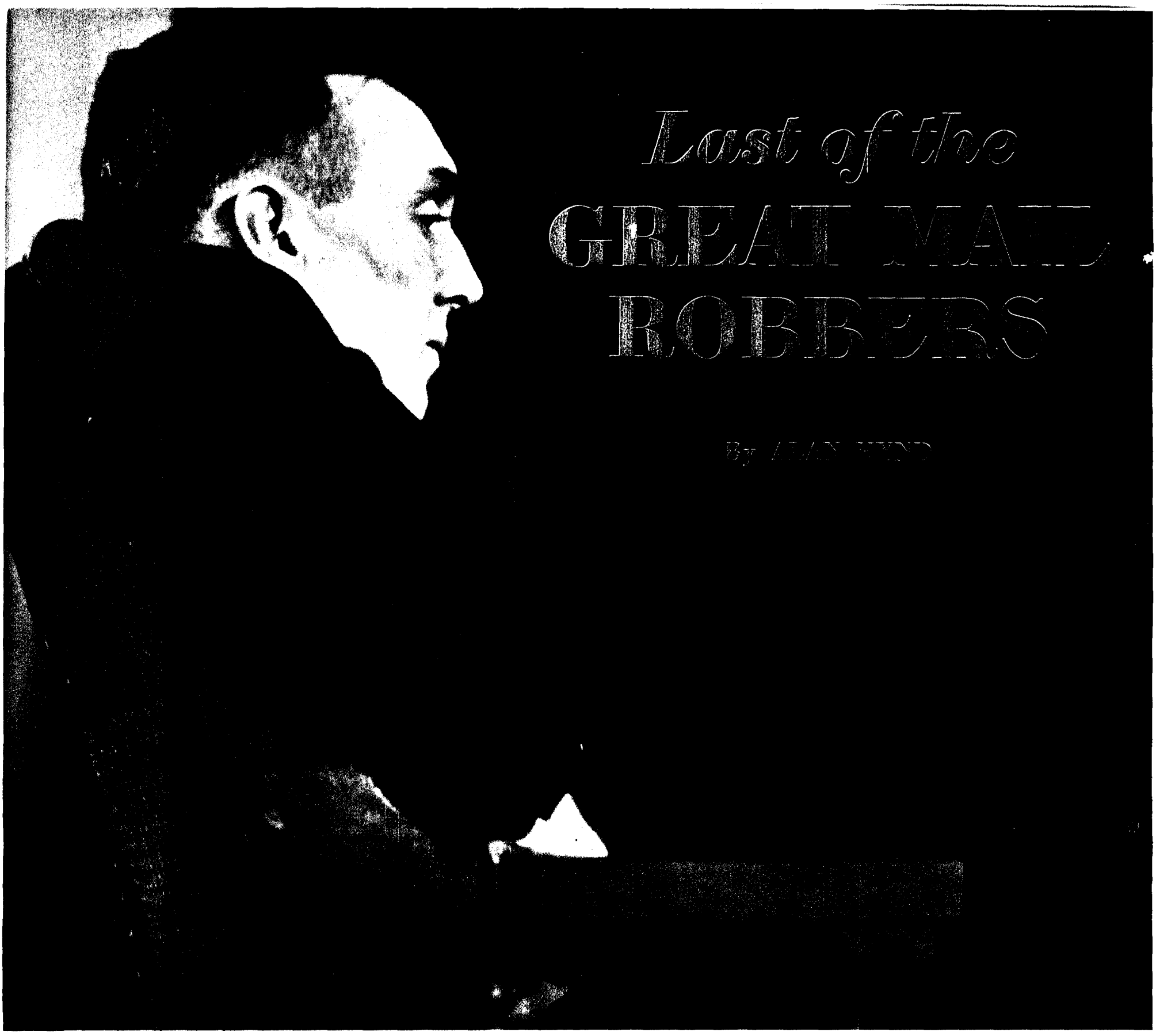
Last of the GREAT MAIL ROBBERS

By [illegible]



For killing Patrolman Skelly, a Hartford, Conn., jury sentenced Chapman to hang

"TWO ropes are festooned from twin holes in the high ceiling to one side of the large room. One of them, the newer one, is the one to be used. If it breaks, the older cord will be called upon. The ropes do not break at Wethersfield, it is said, and as you look at the older, air-tanned rope, you regard it as you would a disappointed understudy of the stage whose star never is ill or on vacation, and you imagine it is thinking:

*"I, too, am hungry for the kill. Here have I been for eight hangings, but, as usual, I haven't any chance. Chapman weighs but 134 pounds and that isn't likely to strain such a young, strong fellow as my brother rope . . ."**

* * *

On a gloomy day last January, when a bandit mob took over Brink's Express Company in Boston and walked off with more than $1,000,000 in cash, veteran detectives had to think back more than a quarter of a century to recall a criminal escapade as bold in conception, as skillful in execution, and as stimulating to the imagination. On the night of October 24, 1921, a bandit named Gerald Chapman, and two companions, held up a United States postal truck on a New York street and made off with a king's ransom in registered mail.

Gerald Chapman was a spare little man in his thirties, with a pale, thoughtful face, a scholar's forehead, and greenish eyes that were usually described as sunken. Although he spent 13 of his last 19 years in prisons, he was looked upon in law-enforcement circles as the brainiest criminal of his era.

There was nothing in Chapman's background to suggest that he would one day attain national notoriety. His precise origin is cloaked in dispute. He seems to have been born on New York's lower East Side, about 1888. He grew up in Hell's Kitchen, where the kids played spin the truant officer, and he achieved a fat dossier as a slippery, precocious juvenile delinquent. By the time he was twenty-three, Chapman was a two-time loser as an armed robber, doing 10 to 15 years in Auburn Prison.

In Auburn, Chapman chummed up with a mild-looking, beautifully educated disgrace to a nice family named George (Dutch) Anderson. Anderson, who appraised life through thick-lensed eyeglasses, taught Chapman languages, poetry and philosophy. As the sentence years rolled by, Gerald Chapman took on such cultivation that he became known as a high-brow among malefactors. Released within a few months of each other in 1919, when both were about thirty-one, Chapman and Anderson teamed up in the Midwest. There they worked as confidence men and bootleggers. They hit New York in January, 1921, determined to be big-timers. Posing as Texas oil millionaires, they rented an opulent apartment in sedate Gramercy Park. The boys really lived. What with high life and low blondes, they sometimes managed to get rid of $1,000 a day.

One morning in March, Chapman and Anderson saw by the papers there had been numerous robberies of the U.S. mails during the preceding two months. The epidemic of crimes—inside thefts by traitorous clerks, stick-ups of letter carriers, an occasional robbery of a mail truck—was ascribed to inadequate funds for proper protection.

* — *Gene Fowler, the New York American, April 6, 1926.*

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A couple of hours later Chapman and Anderson were sitting in one of three expensive cars Chapman owned, parked in downtown Manhattan. They were peering through powerful field glasses at the loading platform of City Hall Post Office, one of the busiest in the country.

For several days they studied the faces of the drivers of arriving and departing trucks and of the platform workers hustling the mail. They finally settled on the face of a middle-aged platform man. The man looked worried—worried, they hoped, about money.

Chapman and Anderson roped him in his favorite speak-easy. The platform man, up to his eyebrows in debt, fell in with plans for a mail-truck robbery for a share of the loot. He disclosed that a truck loaded with registered mail and manned only by an unarmed driver left City Hall Post Office nightly for a run to the Main Post Office at Eighth Avenue and Thirty-third Street.

Chapman and Anderson began to follow the truck. They alternated cars so as not to attract attention. The truck, driven by the same man for 15 years, never varied its course. After leaving the loading platform, it headed two blocks west through Park Place, then turned into West Broadway for a northward run to its destination.

West Broadway, a hive of activity by day, was a graveyard by night. It was, moreover, poorly illuminated and poorly policed. The criminals tentatively decided to take over the truck on lower Broadway, then run it into one of the even more desolate intersecting side streets, there to loot it.

Checking on Mail-Truck Driver

The plotters now investigated the driver, a middle-aged man named Frank Havernack. Posing as credit investigators, they asked his neighbors questions about him. They concluded Havernack was a mild, peaceful man who wouldn't cause them any trouble.

In casting about for someone to drive the getaway car, Chapman and Anderson settled on a bushy-browed man named Charles Loerber, whom they knew from prison. Loerber, fast of mind and reflexes, was declared in for a third of the loot.

A hide-out would be necessary. Loerber had a friend who owned a bungalow at Lake Ronkonkoma, about 50 miles out on Long Island. Chapman looked over the place and decided it would do.

Although Chapman and Anderson had begun to lay the groundwork for the crime in March, it was October before they prepared to address themselves to the actual event. That was par for the course. The professional robber is meticulous; advance planning is usually so thorough that the crime itself is an anticlimactic breeze. The recent Brink crime was a case in point.

On the night of October 24th, Loerber, driving a touring car stolen for the occasion, picked up the mail truck when it swung into West Broadway. Chapman and Anderson were sitting in the rear of the car, guns drawn. Even the weather had entered the conspiracy; the sky was filled by low-scudding rain clouds and downtown Manhattan was gloomier than usual.

Eight blocks north, at the intersection of Leonard Street, there wasn't a soul in sight. The touring car drew abreast of the mail truck. "Pull up!" Chapman shouted to the driver. "Pull up or we'll blow your brains out!"

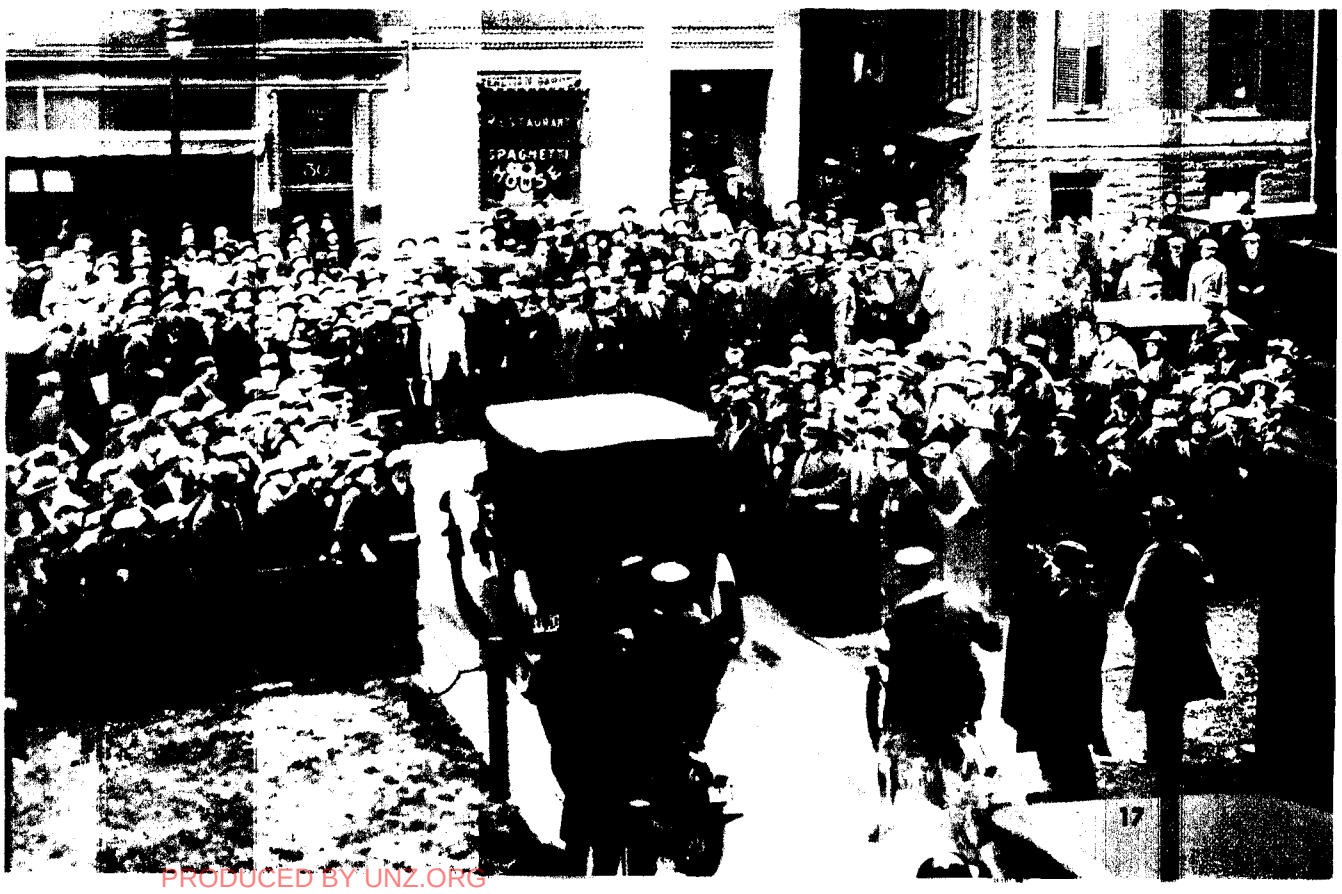
Havernack reached for the hand brake. Chapman climbed up on the seat with him. "Pull in over there," he ordered. "Into Leonard Street." Havernack hesitated. Chapman stuck a gun to his temple and the truck began to move.

Leonard Street was like a tomb. The truck came to a stop and the touring car pulled up behind it. Loerber stayed at the wheel, motor running, while Chapman and Anderson hustled Havernack to the back of the truck. There the driver was forced to take a key from his vest pocket and unlock the rear door. Anderson held him at gun point, while Chapman leaped inside. Chapman, using a flashlight, examined the mail sacks. Four bore registry seals. These he tossed into Leonard Street.

Nobody was talking. Havernack's eyes had accommodated themselves to the gloom. He could see that the man who was holding him at gun point wore thick-lensed glasses. He had the impression that the man in the truck had sunken eyes and high cheekbones. *(Continued on page 67)*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY INTERNATIONAL

Above: Following his sensational escape from the Federal Prison at Atlanta, mail bandit Gerald Chapman (center) was arrested in Muncie, Indiana. Below: Interest in the Chapman case was so great it drew huge crowds to courthouse in March, 1925



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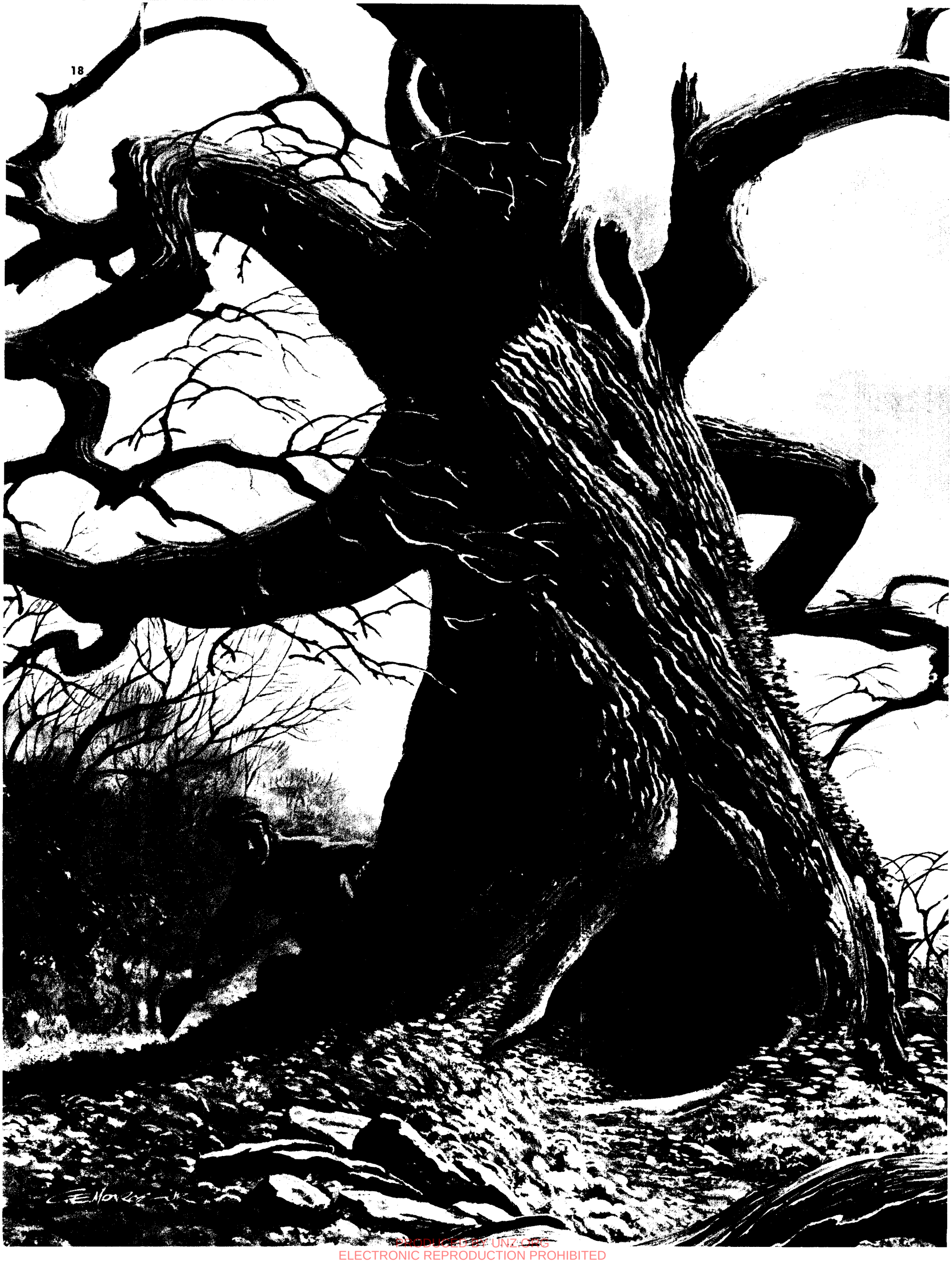

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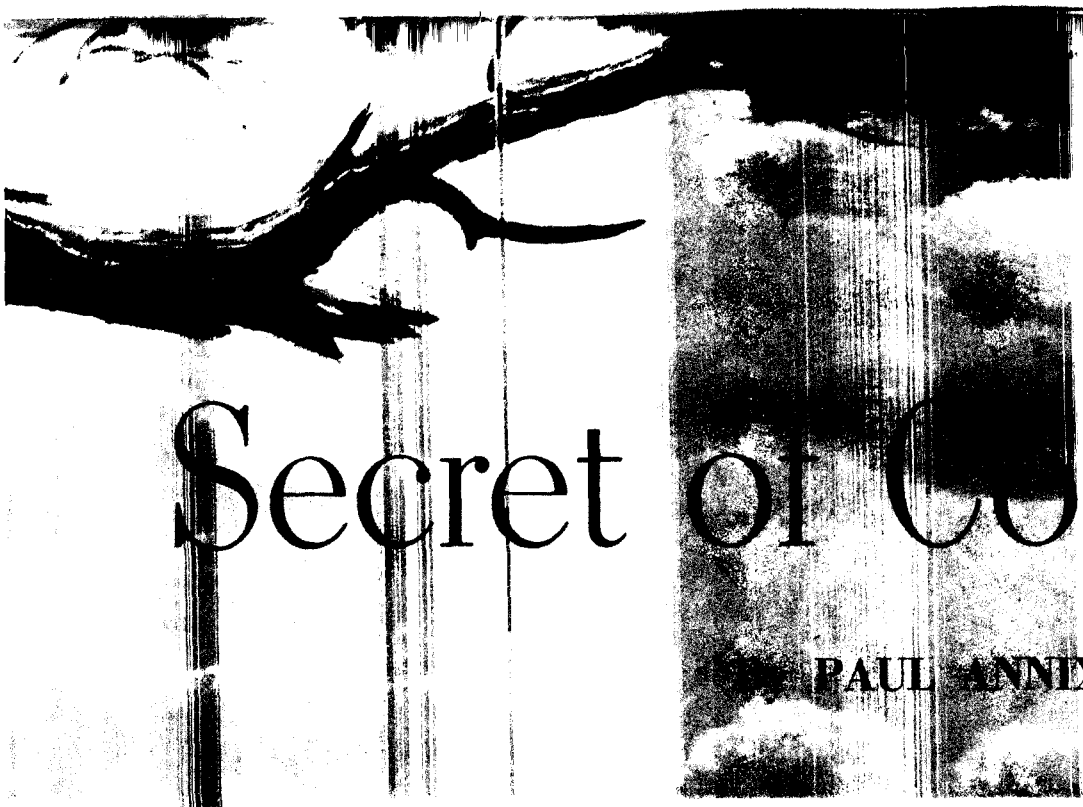

Secret of Coon Castle

PAUL ANNIXTER

This was a secret that would be kept forever. Two of the conspirators wouldn't tell—the other two couldn't

I'VE been visiting the old Cane River place again. Last Sunday I went down to the Branch to look at Coon Castle, the great lightning-blasted oak with the dark hollow between its roots and the two other hollows far up in the trunk. There it was, just the same as when I was a shirt-tail kid in these woods. I never knew who named it, but there have always been coons living in Coon Castle, as long as I can remember and as long as my father could remember. There's a pair in it now—not ordinary coons, mind you, but supercoons. Only a king coon could hold a castle like that.

It's a mighty coveted place, you see, topping the big rise at the bend of the river. There's a lot of fungus growth in the lower hollow, and a great patch of it stretching all round the tree. It would take something as smart as a coon to put a thing like that to use. There's a story connected with that fungus, and I'm writing it all down now because I don't ever want to forget the way it was—and it's a long time since it happened.

I remember well the old coon that lived in the castle when I was a kid of thirteen. Old Bandit, he was called, and he was known to every hunter in the country. He was respected, too. In the year 1903, that was, and old Nat Stemline was living in a rickety bark-covered cabin about a mile down the Branch from our place. He hunted and trapped for a living. Sometimes he guided city hunters on bear or deer hunts, but not often. Nat hated the commotion of city men and dogs in the deep woods. He was a still-hunter and never used a dog himself.

Nat repaired guns for the men of the district and he was an expert fly tier, too. Anglers used to say no one in the country could make artificial flies like Nat. His flies were so lifelike they all seemed about to take wing and swoop out his cabin door. And that's the way they affected the big old rainbow trout, too.

I never knew Nat well, as one would know a close friend. He wasn't that kind of man. He wore moccasins of his own making. His old leather coat was weathered to the hue of bark and earth and stones and lichen and all those things that are exposed winter and summer to every kind of weather. He wore an old felt hat of the same indeterminate shade. He was as much a part of the woods as the breeze or the leaf shadows. You never saw him unless he wanted you to. You never heard him coming; you'd just turn around and there he'd be beside you.

Nat had a pet coon that had free run of his cabin. He was a wild one. Nat could do anything he liked with him, but no one else could get near him. Hunters knew about the coon and they let him strictly alone under pain of Nat's lasting enmity. Oh, I haven't the words to tell what Nat meant to me and most of the boys of the district. He was a romantic figure, dim and fabulous as Robin Hood or Daniel Boone.

I was verging on thirteen then and steeped in the Indian tales of Fenimore Cooper. That was the year I set out to win old Nat over. For Nat, you see, was the living, breathing replica of all the buckskin heroes I'd ever read about.

But I had a time of it trying to woo the old man, for my family didn't approve of him. We Tygarts had quite a name in the land in those days and they had great hopes for me at *(Continued on page 54)*

ILLUSTRATED BY C. E. MONROE, JR.

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A fourteen-year-old girl en route to meet her parents in Cincinnati gets personal attention from Mrs. Marion Halket, executive secretary of the Springfield, Mass., society. Below: Captain Carl H. Hannerman and family are assisted by Travelers Aid worker Therese O'Malley

Somebody

Many who are "on the road" need help and the kindly folks at the nearest Travelers Aid desk do a fine job of comforting them when they're lonely, ill or in trouble. But it's not all grim work. Take the case of the old gentleman who refuses to hold still for his regular Saturday night bath

ONE of America's most persistent runaways is an old gentleman, upward of eighty, who lives with his son and daughter-in-law in an upstate New York town. He is a contented old gentleman for most of the week; but when Friday comes around he begins to get fidgety, because he knows that on Saturday he will again be faced with a chronic and grievous emotional problem.

At some point on Saturday, he knows, he will hear the loathsome sound of running water upstairs, and a few minutes later his daughter-in-law, an otherwise intelligent and reasonable woman, will call down: "Grandpa! It's time to take your bath!"

To this particular old gentleman the business of regular bathing, week end in and week end out, is morally indefensible and aesthetically revolting. Sometimes he submits to it, albeit with blasphemous bad grace; at other times he cannot face it, and his only resource is to run away from home.

On Monday morning in one nearby city or another, having put both time and space between himself and the perils of Saturday night, the aged fugitive will turn up at the railroad station and surrender himself cheerfully to the lady at the Travelers Aid desk. She will take out a well-thumbed little book, look up the telephone number of the Travelers Aid society in his home town (a number which he could recite to her from memory if he wanted to), and put through a call. The hometown society will telephone to his son, the son will pledge the price of a railroad ticket, and the lady in the station will put the unrepentant codger on the train for home, where the local Travelers Aid lady will deliver him up to his relatives and the prospect of next Saturday's bath.

The affinity between the bathless octogenarian and the Travelers Aid worker is understandable. He knows that the Travelers Aid worker is there expressly to be of assistance to him. He can rely on her to be neither astonished by his plight nor disapproving of the reasons for it. She will act upon his problem with dispatch and decency, without endangering his dignity or his pride.

To the Travelers Aid worker, there is no question of responsibility in the matter. Whether the old gentleman takes his bath or not is of no concern to her. But the mere fact that he has gone to such lengths, literally, to avoid it makes him her "client." There is no basic difference between him and the European refugee, the amnesiac, the runaway unwed mother, the commuter who has left his wallet at home, or the young fellow looking for the rest room. In the simple and dauntless definition of Travelers Aid, all of these are "moving people in need of assistance."

The happy fact that this assistance is available to any and all of them can be ascribed to a number of reasons. One of the earliest and most important is the geographic location of the city of St. Louis.

When the Honorable Bryan Mullanphy of St. Louis, former mayor and circuit court judge, died there in 1851, he left one third of his estate in a trust fund for the city itself. The money, around $600,000, was to be used "to furnish relief to all

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY HANS KNOPF

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Always GOING AWAY

By MARION HARGROVE

poor immigrants and travelers coming to St. Louis on their way, bona fide, to settle in the West."

Although Mullanphy had been regarded in some quarters as an eccentric, there were few in St. Louis (except, perhaps, his relatives) to question the wisdom of his bequest. The city swarmed with covered wagons from the East. Every boat from New Orleans brought a full load of Irish and German immigrants.

They were beset in St. Louis by confusion and poverty, typhus and cholera. As mayor, Mullanphy had thrown open the city hospital to them, built additional hospital sheds and otherwise helped them. Dying, he left money to carry on his work.

The Mullanphy money is still hard at the job today. It pays more than half the expenses of the Mullanphy Travelers Aid Society, a St. Louis agency which in the course of a year helps possibly 50,000 travelers in trouble, including young women looking for work, repatriates returning to the United States, displaced persons from Europe and the Orient, whole families of migrant workers, children traveling alone, members of the armed forces, invalids and semi-invalids in transit, and people who turn up in Union Station or the bus terminal seeking help in locating friends, hotel accommodations or the taxi stand.

Beyond the limits of St. Louis, the memory of Judge Mullanphy will be honored in a centennial celebration next year by an organization which regards him as one of its founders, notwithstanding the fact that he died almost 70 years before the organization came formally into being. The group commemorating him is the National Travelers Aid Association, a network of 110 societies like the Mullanphy Society in St. Louis.

The connection is a valid one. The association is one that gradually evolved through a number of people working separately with the same idea—an idea which Mullanphy was the first to do anything about.

Others who had followed *(Continued on page 73)*

In the Springfield station Mrs. Halket offers advice to transients. All 110 societies in the national organization use lamps like the one here

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By ALEC WAUGH

The SCHOOLMISTRESS

Miss Rudd's heart missed a beat when Lucy rose to ask her question. She was the wrong girl, the wrong girl entirely, to impress an important visitor

"SO YOU want leave to dine out next Wednesday with your brother."

"Yes, please, Miss Rudd."

"But leave to dine out is only given over the week ends."

"I know, Miss Rudd."

"And Wednesday is in the middle of your exams. The holidays will start in three weeks' time. You'll be seeing your brother every day. I don't really see why just because he happens to be passing through—unless of course there's some special reason—"

The schoolmistress paused, interrogatively. The girl flushed, looked down, shifted her feet, then out it came. Her brother wasn't coming down alone. There'd be a friend as well, a friend who was leaving for the Far East next week. It was her last chance of seeing him.

Miss Rudd smiled wryly. She hadn't been a schoolmistress twenty-five years for nothing. It was the kind of thing you could expect from a silly overdeveloped girl like Lucy. If she had her way, girls like Lucy shouldn't be kept on at school, after they were seventeen, thinking and talking about boys all the time, upsetting the other girls. Of course she couldn't go.

"I'm sorry, Lucy, no. Some other time, perhaps, but not in the middle of your exams."

"But please, Miss Rudd."

"I'm sorry. I said no."

There was a look of desperate appeal on the girl's face, but Miss Rudd ignored it. There was a tap upon the door.

"The professor's here, Miss Rudd."

"Please show him in."

Professor Cunningham was bland, urbane, gray-haired, on the brink of seventy. He had come down to lecture the Upper School on modern literature. It was an important occasion for Miss Rudd. At the end of the year the headmistress was retiring. The professor had recently been appointed to the board of governors, and her own chances of succeeding to the post—she was second in seniority—depended a lot on the impression she made on him. She was desperately anxious that everything should go well this morning.

"We were so disappointed," she said, "that you couldn't take luncheon with us. But there's just time for a glass of sherry."

"I thank you, yes."

He raised the glass to his nose, sniffing appreciatively before he tasted the pale yellow wine.

"Tío Pepe, my dear lady—but this is a treat, a great, great treat."

"Perhaps then you will take a second glass."

"Half a glass most certainly."

His smile encouraged her. It had not been easy to get Tío Pepe. She was glad that she had put herself to the expense and trouble.

"I hope you won't mind if the girls ask you questions afterward," she said.

"Of course not, naturally."

"It gives the girls self-confidence and it's useful to me. I can gauge from their questions whether they can take in what I've been teaching them."

"Of course, of course."

"I think we should be going in now, Professor."

The Upper School consisted of some fifty girls between the ages of sixteen and eighteen. Miss Rudd seated herself at the back. For the first quarter of an hour she listened closely. It confirmed her first impression of the professor: a person of no real intellectual distinction; his books—in particular his Aspects of the Elizabethan Stage—the result of laborious scholarship, contained no flashes of creative interpretation. He was not by any means, however, an ineffective speaker. He had a rich full voice, and a distinguished presence. He'll like being asked questions by pretty and well-dressed girls, she thought.

She had a writing pad on her knee. She unscrewed her pencil. "You say," she wrote, "that the artist is the product and interpreter of his period. How do you explain the fact that Jane Austen's novels are free of any references to Napoleon?" She tore out the sheet of paper, folded it over, and wrote "June Barton" on it.

THE girl in front of her was sitting with her hands clasped behind her back. Miss Rudd slipped the note into them. The girl looked at the note, saw to whom it was addressed and passed it forward, then she reclasped her hands behind her back.

It was in this way always that the setting of the questions was stage-managed. Miss Rudd inscribed four notes, then sat back, a resolute, self-confident smile upon her lips. She had chosen carefully both the questions and the girls to ask them. There must be no mistake.

A burst of applause greeted the close of the lecture.

There was a pause, punctuated by a murmur of whispered conversation. There must be always, so Miss Rudd insisted, a pause of at least ninety seconds before the first girl rose. It would not look spontaneous otherwise. The pause had to last just long enough to be about to become embarrassing. She watched the second hand of her watch go round. Seventy seconds, eighty, eighty-five; a blond fresh-complexioned girl with wide blue eyes was *(Continued on page 76)*

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN NORTHCROSS

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FADEOUT

Concluding THE MIKE JACOBS STORY

By BUDD SCHULBERG

Starting as a hungry little newsboy in New York, Mike Jacobs hustled his way to a fortune and to recognition as the greatest promoter the ring has ever known. On his way to the top he didn't make many friends, but he did earn the grudging respect of the people with whom he lived and worked, even when they disapproved of his singular methods. In the final installment of this series by the author of What Makes Sammy Run and The Harder They Fall, Budd Schulberg brings you up to date on the life of Uncle Mike

V

DURING the period when Mike Jacobs held complete domination of the fight world, we spent a week end at his country estate in Rumson, New Jersey.

We found a sprawling 25-room mansion in a section known locally as Millionaires' Row, overlooking close-cropped rolling lawns and beautifully kept gardens. The house and veranda were already crowded with week-end guests—boxers, managers, members of Mike's staff, sports writers, and several individuals of the type who always seem to be in the money.

Lunch was an elaborate and drawn-out barbecue of prize steaks and home-grown corn and tomatoes in which Mike took justifiable pride. A delicious sauce was announced as Mike's own recipe. At Mike's insistence, everyone ate twice as much as he really wanted. Like money-making, eating seemed to be a ritual feverishly indulged in even though divorced from need.

All during the barbecue the talk around Mike was fight business. Then he spent the rest of the afternoon in conference with managers and boxers, one or two at a time, in his circular garden house decorated with photographs and cartoons of famous fights and fighters. That evening the talk around Mike was more fight business. Never about whether this one could lick that one, but how much would they draw. An interested manager would suggest a match and Mike would veto it with a contemptuous "Nah," and a clacking of his false teeth.

After dinner Mike hurried his guests into his expensive cars, raced to a small New Jersey fight club, caught the main event, and rushed us back again. Nearly everyone went to bed without delay. Shortly after, we heard someone prowling around the hall and opened the door to find Uncle Mike in a bathrobe. We followed him downstairs into the kitchen for cold chicken and back to his study. He started his record player and paced the floor while the room filled with an announcer's blow-by-blow description of one of Mike's Garden fights. When the lengthy transcription came to an end, Mike played another one. Instead of reading himself to sleep, he listened himself to sleep with round-by-round playbacks of his own promotions. We could imagine him finally dropping off by counting customers as they passed through the turnstiles.

Although he dosed himself with sleeping pills, we heard him moving around several times during the night. Next morning at six thirty Mike was fully dressed before anyone else and looked miraculously refreshed and reinvigorated. At eight o'clock, with a portable radio at arm's length and the volume turned up to a deafening blast, Mike was talking to several other early risers about a possible opponent for welterweight champion Red Cochrane. Out of the depth of our ignorance we found ourselves, in a timid voice, suggesting Ray Robinson, universally recognized in those days as "the uncrowned welterweight champion." Uncle Mike looked down the table at us in teeth-clacking disgust. "Aaaah, we got too many colored boys on top now. Public's gettin' tired of 'em."

This opinion, it occurred to us, was not tainted with anti-Negro sentiment. It was cold-blooded showmanship, in the same golden rut with the Hollywood producer who decides, "The public's tired of platinum blondes" or "child stars."

Next day at the Jacobs manse was not unlike the first, except that we dined inside at one of the two dining-room tables. They had been bought as a compromise solution to a running debate between Mike and his wife, Josie, as to which table had the most class. Theirs is a union that apparently thrives on argument, for after 35 years Mike and Josie could not seem to agree even on what flowers to plant in their garden. As a result, both had their own flower garden, identified by their names painted on wooden signs.

Unexpectedly, Mike has a genuine but inarticulate appreciation for flowers. He made sure we noticed the size of the peonies and sunflowers that had been planted for him, and gloated a little over their superiority to Josie's. "I got the biggest flowers around here," he boasted. "Lookit my roses, they're bustin' out like cabbages." A number of rare plants and flowers in his garden were given to him by wealthy neighbors in exchange for fight tickets.

Mike's only other diversion that week end was reviewing his horses as they were jumped over barriers for him. He watched a few minutes, barked out crisp orders for particular hurdles he wanted the animals to clear, suddenly lost interest and led a prominent manager back to his garden house to do some business.

We watched in a kind of awe as Mike fastened himself on guest after guest like a human bee, drawing from each whatever he had to offer. A new opponent was written in for Louis. A fight was switched from New York to Detroit because of Uncle Mike's shrewd hunch that it would have greater appeal for Midwesterners. A match in London couldn't go on until it had Mike's approval.

No Title Shot for This Fighter

A boxer who had beaten the champ of his division several times in nontitle bouts was vetoed because he lacked color and box-office appeal. A manager who had been holding out stubbornly for 30 per cent agreed to take 25 per cent for his fighter after Mike had softened him up with a thousand-dollar personal advance.

That afternoon Mike rushed us to a nearby Army camp to watch Buddy Baer, who was getting ready for Louis on Mike's Bum-of-the-Month road show. When we got back, a restless, aggressive house guest, expected 24 hours earlier, finally put in an appearance. It was Billy Conn.

"What ya havin' for dinner?" Conn wanted to know right away.

"Chicken fricassee," Josie Jacobs said.

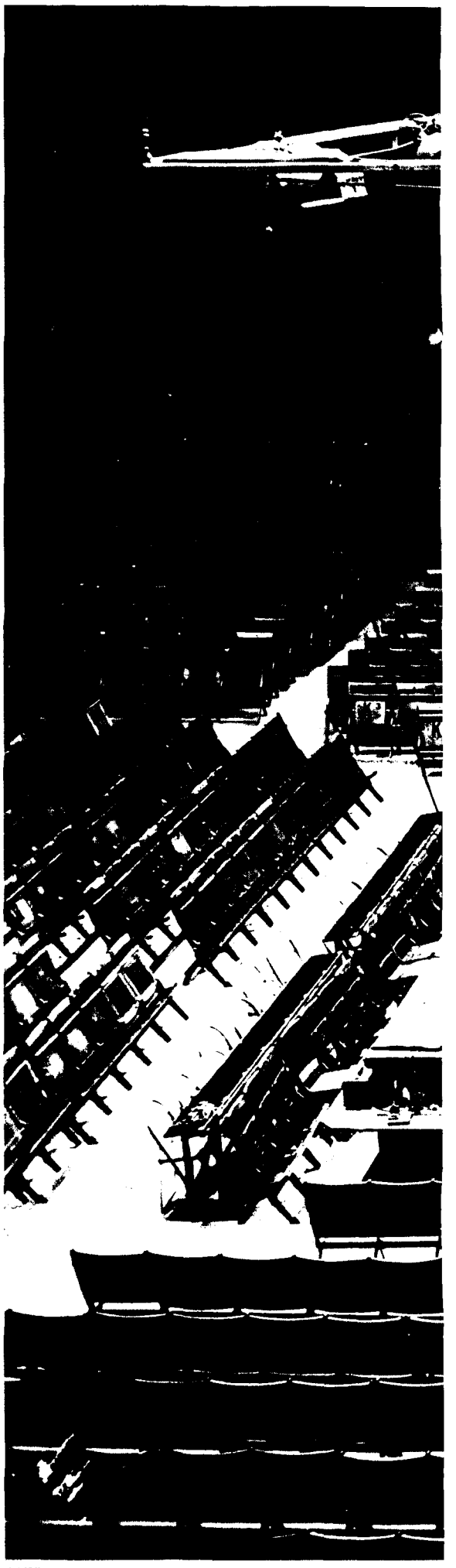
"Aaah," said Conn, expressing violent disgust, "I'm leavin' for a steak."

"Who needs yuh, yuh bum?" Josie yelled after him when the highly combustible Mr. Conn had departed, not to appear again that week end.

"Aaah, lay off him, he's a good kid," Mike snapped. He had just begun the build-up on Conn as Louis' next important opponent.

When we left Rumson that Sunday night, we were convinced that not even in Hollywood, where shoptalk is as insistent as anyplace we know, had we ever run into such unrelieved single-mindedness. For three full days, with only a few hours off to rest those supercharged batteries, this man had talked about fighters, talked to fighters, watched fighters train, watched fighters fight, dealt with their managers or, in desperation, when everyone else had gone to bed on him, listened to transcriptions of old fights he had promoted.

Even as a millionaire grossing three to five million dollars a year, Mike ran his powerful corporation with the minute-to-minute personal touch



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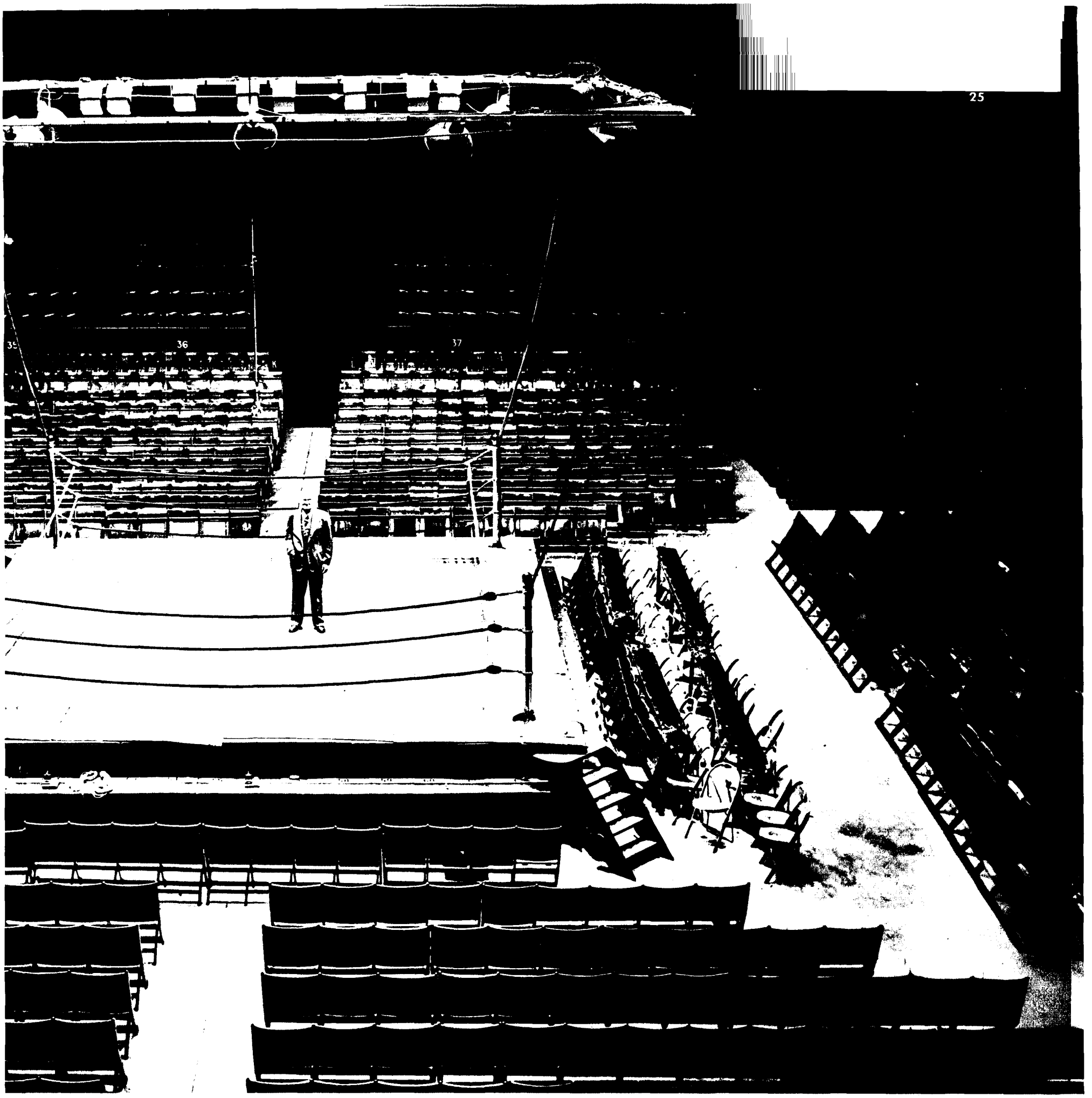

Just before retiring, Mike surveys the great empty spaces of the Garden—a sight he rarely saw as a promoter

of a hot-dog vendor. At big fights he could be seen serving as his own sentry between the ringside and the next expensive section. "If ya don't watch everything yerself, they'll rob ya blind," he used to say. If he spotted confusion, he'd beeline to the argument and personally escort the customers to their seats. Once when the general admissions were lagging, Mike grabbed up a megaphone in reversion to his excursion-boat days and started barking, "This way, fella. Lotsa good seats left." At another championship fight Mike was found outside the stadium helping to direct traffic.

Mike's ability to keep one eye on the big money and the other on nickels and dimes was pointed out rather effectively by sports columnist Dan Parker of the New York Mirror, who never hesitated to lower the boom.

While Mike's promotions ran to many millions every year, he operated his St. Nicholas Arena "farm club" under his Garden license, although the cost of a separate license would have been just $500. Parker kept badgering the Boxing Commission to make Uncle Mike pony up the extra fee, until the official body at that time finally acted. Since Mike needed the extra $500 about as much as he needed an extra comb for his balding pate, his stubborn efforts to hold out on the state of New York would seem to fall into the province of the psychoanalyst rather than the moralist.

But not even a blast from Dan Parker could rouse Mike to anger more quickly than the sight of Joe Gould coming up to collect his share of the gate after a Louis title fight. The agreement he had made with Gould and Braddock in his determination to lure them from the Garden became a repugnant document to him. If you have ever seen a giant tarpon trying to throw the hook you have a graphic picture of Mike fighting to extricate himself from the agreement *(Continued on page 70)*

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When You

It was a time of hard choices for George Alford. He had to decide between Honey and Sarah. And was his duty as a cop more important than friendship?

All at once Sarah broke up. She shook with laughter. It was nice, throaty laughing

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Come Home

By WILLIAM R. SCOTT

The Story: The news of his father's death brought GEORGE ALFORD back to his home town of Clover, Oklahoma, which he had left ten years before to enlist in the Marines. His only purpose in returning was to sell the little farm his father had left him, and then get out of town as fast as possible. He had bitter memories of his father, who had been the town drunk when George saw him last. And he had no love for Clover, whose respectable people had shut George out during his unhappy childhood.

In spite of his dislike of the place, George immediately became involved in its affairs. Against his better judgment, he found himself greatly attracted to SARAH BAILEY, whom he remembered as a little girl, but who was now grown into lovely young womanhood. Sarah was discontented with small-town life and drawn to George by a romantic interest in his adventurous wanderings.

George renewed acquaintance with CHARLEY RAINFALL, a Cherokee Indian who had once saved his life when they were Marines together in the Pacific. With the help of HARMON DAVIS, mayor of Clover, George helped Charley out of a scrape with the law when the Indian was picked up on a drunk-and-disorderly charge. From Sarah's father, ROY BAILEY, who owned a café, George learned that JUD CLYMER—a boyhood pal of his and Charley's—was a fugitive from the law as a holdup man and killer and a jail-breaker.

While he was staying at a tourist camp on the edge of town, George's old jalopy was rifled and his War Bonds and an uncashed disability pension check were stolen. Reluctantly, he accepted the offer made by Mayor Davis to become the Clover town marshal; his intention was to keep the job only until he had saved some money and sold his farm. He placed an ad in the newspaper owned by BOB and ANN WOODRUFF, a friendly young married couple.

On his first date with Sarah, George ran into trouble. They drove to a roadhouse near the neighboring town of Osage Springs. Their pleasant evening was interrupted by the arrival of an alluring but hard-bitten woman whom George knew only by the name of HONEY; with her was JOHNNY CLYMER, a cocky young cousin of Jud Clymer. Angry when Sarah refused to dance with him, Johnny pulled a knife on George; a fight was avoided only by George flashing his marshal's badge.

When he brought Sarah home, her father angrily scolded George for keeping her out so late and warned him to stay away from the girl in the future. Back at his farm, George was troubled by memories of his father and fell into an uneasy sleep. He was awakened by the banging of the screen door on the back porch.

III

THE door banged again, and I lay there in the dark with my heart pounding. *Go to sleep,* I told myself angrily. *You afraid of ghosts, boy?* But maybe I was already asleep; maybe I was half dreaming. The sound of the wind and the sound of the banging door were loud—and whatever was happening to me was vivid enough to be real. Stealthy memories were alive in my room; old terrors were at large everywhere in the house.

It seemed I was thirteen again, and they told me my mother was dead, and I didn't believe it at first. She couldn't be dead. I didn't want her to be dead. God wouldn't let her be dead. But in my mother's case, God had made an exception. He let her be dead, of pneumonia. Just like he'd let Elmo be dead when I was eleven—but Elmo didn't die of pneumonia. He was four years older than me when I was eleven, and he never got any older. It was a day, *the* day, and it was vivid to me.

"Hello, boys," my mother said. Some kids had come around the house from the road, and were standing in the backyard near the door, and she had opened the door and was standing there with her hands in her apron, looking at them. "You're shivering, you must be cold," she said. "Don't you want to come in and get warm?"

"No, ma'am," the biggest one said, looking at the ground. There were three of them, and they were all looking at the ground, and I stopped pumping water into the bucket and watched them.

"Did you want to see Elmo?" she said. "I think he went skating."

"No, ma'am," the biggest one said, and his voice cracked, and he gouged at his eyes with cold blue fists and bent over.

"Why, what's the matter?" my mother said, bewildered, alarmed. "Are you sick?"

The kid looked at her and his face was all twisted up and he was crying. He couldn't talk. He kept trying to tell her something, and he couldn't. The two smaller boys started crying then. It was pretty awful.

I think she knew then. She put a hand to her throat and looked toward the river and said in a faint voice: "Ben!" My father was in the barn, and she said it again, louder. "Ben!" And then she screamed it. *"Ben!"* My father came to the barn door. *"It's Elmo!"* she screamed. And without getting a coat or a shawl or anything, she started toward the river, running in the awkward, ridiculous way women run. I didn't know what was going on, and I stood there by the pump watching her, feeling paralyzed. But then I saw that the three boys were carrying ice skates, and I began to cry, too . . .

I had cried that night, and for many nights afterward, and now it was sixteen years later and I was lying in the same bed, not crying, but shivering, and it seemed to me I could hear sobbing in my mind. It was first my mother weeping for Elmo, and me, too, and then it was me making terrible dry hopeless sounds in the dark because my mother was dead and I was thirteen. And faintly it was my father, weeping for them both.

Wake up, I kept telling myself. *You're having a nightmare.* But I kept lying there stiff and uneasy under the thin quilt that weighed a ton and listening to the old, old sounds in my mind. A piano and a violin, my mother chording while my father—*not the one I remember,* I thought—fiddled. I suppose they played very badly, but they enjoyed it. They played Ramona, and If I Had the Wings of an Angel, and the one I still caught myself humming sometimes, In the Gloaming.

The back door banged louder, thumping, and the wind moaned, and in my mind were moans and curses and thumping, sodden falls, mingling with the wailing of a lonesome fiddle. When he was drunk, my father fiddled alone—never when he was sober. I'd heard that fiddle crying on bleak winter nights and dripping autumn nights, and wild-wind nights of spring storm, and also on moonlight nights in summer and fall and winter. But they were all alike to him; black, stumbling drunken nights. And all alike to me, too, because I'd lain in that bed stiff and smothering, afraid and ashamed of the raving, red-eyed, unshaven man who cursed the world as he fiddled.

You've just got the jitters, I told myself rationally. But a heavy distress weighed me down: I couldn't sleep, and I couldn't fight the ghosts away. So I got up.

I went barefooted across the dining-room linoleum and through the kitchen, and hooked the door so it wouldn't bang in the cold wind. When I got back to the dining room I stopped and stared at the closed door of my father's room. I stared at the door, and then I took three steps and grabbed the knob and yanked it open and snapped on the light in there. *See?* I said to myself. *Nothing.*

But I shivered when I said it. The room was neat and unoccupied, and had no special character—with the door open. I turned out the light and went back to bed, and this time I didn't have any trouble, none at all. I wondered if it had really been that simple—just open a door and it's Pandora's box in reverse. I went to sleep, and didn't dream.

After that first night, I didn't have any trouble with the old house again. I simply opened the door and left it open, and the place lost its license to haunt me. . . .

Two nights and I'm still here, I thought when I woke up. But I knew I'd stay as long as I had to stay, and that was that. It was another cloudy day, and in the grayness of morning I took myself to task about Sarah Bailey, and I got that all squared away, too. It was easy. Too damned easy.

You saw last night how young and shallow she is, I told myself. I decided to buy groceries and start eating breakfasts and suppers at home. I'd get my lunch at the café after Sarah went off duty. I admitted to myself that I probably had a streak of romantic nonsense in my nature that sometimes made me a little susceptible to naïve and sulky little girls, and the best way to squelch it was to avoid said little girls. It wasn't, I kept telling myself, that I was afraid of being foolish again myself if I saw her too often. I was merely letting her down easy before she got any ideas, since getting ideas about a foot-loose character like me wouldn't buy her a thing but grief. That's what I kept telling myself—and I wished I believed it . . .

LATER that week—on Wednesday, in fact—I began to enjoy my new job when I caught lawyer Welty backing down Main Street on the wrong side. The mayor fined him thirteen dollars and fifty cents for reckless driving. I decided the ideal city marshal would be the laziest character in town, and that the job would drive an active man nuts unless he were an avid checker or domino player. I played neither, although I did indulge in a few hot games of rummy with the mayor in his office.

It was also on that first Wednesday of my sojourn in the town I wanted no part of, that I drove out to Charley's house, and was told by Old Indian that Charley was working at a sawmill down on the river. As I was leaving, the old Cherokee grunted and said them possum, him gettin' plenty juicy, goin' be ripe mos' any day now.

And then Wednesday afternoon a short, grizzled farmer I recognized as old Ott Shepley, whose hundred and sixty acres adjoined my eighty on the north, hunted me down and cornered me in the pool hall just as I was about to bank the seven ball in a crucial game of snooker that had a beer riding on the outcome. I missed the shot and Chalky Barnes, who had been a couple of years ahead of me in high school, won the game. So I invited Ott Shepley to have a beer with us, and he agreed.

He drank half his beer before he spoke, and then he said: "Now, George, about them steers and stuff. You aim fer me to . . ."

"What steers?" I said.

"Your paw's," he said. "I taken 'em over to my place, and been seein' to 'em. You aim fer me to go on tendin' 'em fer a spell, or what?"

I had to recover from the shock before I could decide. "Well," I said. "I'm trying to sell the farm, Mr. Shepley. Until I do, I'd sure appreciate it if you'd look after the stock for me. I'll be glad to pay you for your time and trouble."

He snorted into his beer glass. "Don't want no pay!" he said. " 'Cept'n what's fair exchange fer the hay and grain they eat. Ben done me favors galore, boy. Don't reckon to git the best of it now." He put down his empty glass and scowled at me. "Don't let no one rook you on that farm," he said grouchily. "She's worth a right smart piece of cash, boy."

"What *is* it worth?" I said. "Including everything?"

"Crops an' all?" he said, pulling his bushy eyebrows down over his eyes. *(Continued on page 38)*

ILLUSTRATED BY GLEN FLEISCHMANN

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The man who COMES TO

Don McNeill serves a menu of pun and prayer, song and story so appetizing he has been a radio "must" since '33

DONALD THOMAS McNEILL, a friend of his recently remarked, "was born with a silver pun in his mouth." This probably was true, but McNeill long since has transmuted the silver into solid, 24-carat gold. He discovered the formula for this alchemic magic nearly 17 years ago—at 8:00 A.M. on June 23, 1933, to be exact.

That morning he leaned confidentially toward a radio microphone in Chicago and cheerily warbled, "Good morning. We invite you to be seated around the breakfast table of the air. This is your toastmaster, Don McNeill, who has just been taking a peek at the morning paper. I see that chess has come into some prominence again. They say one chess factory has expanded and now employs twice as many men as before.

"I tell you, it makes you feel good when you can double your chess expansion . . ."

Upon which, no doubt, the early-morning grouches among his listeners choked on their coffee and took axes to their radios. But there are, it turned out, millions of others, who greatly enjoy a helping of verbal corn along with their corn flakes. They have reacted to McNeill with such enthusiasm that he and his hour-long matutinal merriment have been on the air at least five times a week ever since that June morning. His Breakfast Club variety show (now broadcast from the Civic Theater in Chicago's Civic Opera Building and heard over 255 American Broadcasting Company stations every Monday through Friday at 8:00-9:00 A.M. Central, Mountain and Pacific times, 9:00-10:00 A.M. in the East) has become a national institution.

Puns are a basic ingredient, but there is a good deal of more serious leavening. Such items include a brief prayer, an appeal to listeners to write letters to some group of shut-ins and a little tale with a strong heartthrob.

These features, the commercials and the music are prepared in advance, but most of the show just happens spontaneously. McNeill and his cast—comics Sam Cowling and Fran Allison, singers Johnny Desmond, Patsy Lee and twelve-year-old Bernie Christianson—depend almost entirely on the spur of the moment for inspiration. And, sometimes gilding the lily of spontaneity, several members of the audience are called to the mike every morning for extemporaneous interviews. "Anyone who can tell what's going to happen on that show," a sponsor's representative opined uneasily, "ought to go into the crystal-ball-gazing business. I get twinges in my ulcer every time I listen to it."

Fred Allen, one of show business's most famous ad lib artists, greatly admires McNeill's handling of the show.

"Don was one of the pioneers in radio," Allen said recently. "In my estimation the type of program he has done down through the years has been the right approach to radio and to the listener. The glib gentry who came later never were able to establish the friendly relation between actor and listener that Don and his type enjoy.

"Of course, in Don's case it hasn't been acting. He's a big friendly fellow whose good nature pours through the microphone, and listeners react in the same way anyone reacts meeting him in person. He and the other early settlers of radio established

The Breakfast Club (l. to r.): producer Cliff Petersen, orchestra leader Ed Ballantine, Don McNeill, Johnny Desmond, Sam Cowling, Patsy Lee

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BREAKFAST

an intimacy that kept their audiences permanently loyal."

The extent of that loyalty has startled even McNeill's sponsors. A few years ago one of them decided to organize listeners into local clubs with membership cards and perhaps a monthly bulletin. Public-relations men estimated it might be possible to enroll 100,000 fans. Accordingly, the sponsor budgeted $15,000 for the project, and one Monday morning McNeill announced it on the air.

By the end of the first week the man who had proposed the idea was a pariah in his own office, which was swamped under more than 500,000 applications.

Before the plan could be called off and the fans persuaded to abandon the idea, the total passed the million mark. It cost the sponsor $50,000 just to put an end to the scheme.

Watching McNeill in action makes this enthusiasm on the part of his fans understandable. Now forty-two, he has a kind of youthful bounciness which is irresistible to almost anyone except a determined antemeridian curmudgeon. He stands six feet two and weighs sufficiently more than 200 pounds to give his face a perceptibly double-chinned geniality. His big, curved beak of a nose, while not quite in the Schnozzola Durante tradition, still gives him a jocular look, and his easy grin completes the effect.

"He looks like the kind of guy," one of his colleagues said, "you sort of hope will say something funny. I think that's why he can get away with even the most outrageous puns."

Another reason is that success has failed to turn him into a show-business sharpie. To his fans he still seems like the home-town boy who went to the big city and made good, then stayed good. His voice has a cozy, comfortable ring which makes audible the capitals in such words as Home and Motherhood, and his diction is the kind that never substitutes a formal phrase like "going to" for a simple word like "gonna."

Both on and off the show he dresses in conservatively tailored suits, like a successful small-town banker, and he seldom is too busy to chat with members of the studio audience after the broadcast.

Show Is Lively—But Foodless

McNeill tries to keep his show lively and moving along at a brisk pace. It is divided into four 15-minute "calls to breakfast." No food is served on any of them, but there is a good deal of talk about it since the first is sponsored by a cereals maker (General Mills), the second and third by a meat packer (Swift) and the fourth by an electrical appliances firm (Philco). Things often happen so fast and so unpredictably, however, that even the commercials may have to be trimmed down.

Least predictable of all are the interviews. McNeill picks interviewees on the basis of looks, unusual names or the comments they write on cards which they leave at the studio door on their arrival. Many audience members, anxious to be called on, write lengthy autobiographies, but he seldom knows what to expect when they reach the mike.

Once a fourteen-year-old lad intrigued McNeill by noting on his card that he had had a lot of difficulty getting to the studio. Called to the mike and asked what he meant, he explained quite seriously:

"Well, you see, there's four of us in the family, and we only had three tickets. So I was the one that was going to be left home. Mom and Dad and Grandma were planning to get up at four this morning to get here on time.

"Well, last night I put a couple of sleeping tablets in Grandma's milk. She decided not to get up this morning. So I got to use her ticket."

He brought down the house. To this day McNeill doesn't know whether the story was true or the boy invented it.

More often, however, *(Continued on page 34)*

The character in long underwear and ear muffs is Sam Cowling, who has been clowning on the program daily since 1940. The other cut-ups are Patsy Lee, Don McNeill and Johnny Desmond

Fun in the McNeills' home in Winnetka, Illinois: Don with his wife, Kay, and, in the usual order, sons Don, 14, Bobby, 9, and Tom, 16. None of the boys is aiming for a radio career

COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY CHICAGO PHOTOGRAPHERS

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The LAST SOUVENIR

Suspicion dawned on how this sleek, self-assured woman reacted to the snapshot Vergie showed her. Would she recognize herself as she used to be years ago—young and lovely and bewildered?

By LESTER ATWELL

SLIDING back the white curtain of the booth. Vergie came in with tiny steps, trundling her manicurist's table close at her heels. "G' afternoon!" she cried nervously. "I'm *sorry* I had to keep you waiting, but wasn't your appointment for three thirty?"

Purposely vague, inconsiderate of appointments—in one of her moods, Vergie saw at once—Mrs. Summers did not immediately reply. Large and handsome, she sat smiling dreamily at her own reflection in the mirror.

"Three thirty?" she asked at length. "Was it? Do you know, I never can recall." There were flutters, little rushes of secret laughter beneath the whispery, exciting voice. "I do know while Marcia was doing my hair they wanted someone else to do my nails, but I told Miss Estelle I wouldn't *think* of having anyone but you: I was so pleased with you the last few times."

"Oh, well, that was awfully sweet of you!" But Vergie was not taken in by the flattery. Mrs. Summers, she was now almost positive, was not the vague, frivolous woman she appeared. Mrs. Summers was up to something. She wanted something. She wants to know how much *I* know.

Vergie's heart was thumping. She patted one of the sherry-colored curls which without dyeing would have been cotton-white. "Your hair turned out lovely this time. Mm, 's beautiful!" The eyes of the client and manicurist met, and locked for a moment in the mirror. Cat and mouse! The words pounced in Vergie's mind, and against a dark velvet background she saw the cat hunching itself for the spring, saw the mouse making nervous little motions from side to side. Only which of them—she or Mrs. Summers—which was the cat, and which was the mouse?

"I often meant to ask you," Vergie said, moving off to fill her fluted paper cups with warm water, "do you always get a henna rinse? I m-mean, did you always have reddish-colored hair? You know, like when you were a girl?"

"Did I have reddish hair? My dear, my hair's been every color under the sun." Softly, tremblingly, Mrs. Summers appeared to be laughing at herself. Or at me, Vergie thought. She's wise to me. No, she couldn't be. If she was, she'd never have the nerve to come back here today. I still have the ace up my sleeve. If only I knew how to use it.

She knew she would have to proceed with the greatest caution; a mistake, after all, could cost her her job. Vergie returned with her bowls of water, seated herself, plugged in her little lamp, and spread a linen towel across the lap of her white nylon uniform. She was a tall, swaying, boneless-looking girl in her early thirties, with opaque eyes, a nose that was too large and a chin line that sloped, but Miss Estelle's had contributed a superbly tinted hothouse complexion, mascaraed lashes, a curling scarlet mouth, and shimmering peach-colored hair.

"The same this time?" she asked, moistening a pad of cotton, beginning to remove the natural-colored polish from the broad oval nails. Two large diamond rings on Mrs. Summers' hand rippled into fire under the lamplight. That one—the solitaire surrounded by smaller diamonds—couldn't they be the same stones, reset? Oh, what nonsense! Mama never had diamonds *half* that size.

And yet the suspicion had been there, growing slowly, ever since Mrs. Summers had said, "Vergie. What an odd name. I knew a Vergie once."

"You did? Where?"

"Oh, it was a long time ago. The Vergie I knew was only a little girl."

A moment later Mrs. Summers had asked idly, "What's your other name?"

"Hanson. Vergie Hanson."

And then Vergie could have sworn that the strong hand resting in hers had stiffened convulsively. Unless, Vergie thought, I'm going crazy and imagining all this. I'll wait, and if she brings it up again today, if she asks me one more thing about my Aunt Rosa, then I'll know. And if I'm right—

Vergie found herself facing a blinding white glare with a shutter falling over it: the same thing one sees when the reel of a motion picture snaps off and flies apart.

ON SEVERAL occasions the girls in the shop had discussed Mrs. Summers, and agreed there was something evasive and mysterious about her. Her age, they guessed, would be close to fifty. She was well-preserved, discreetly plump, and serene. She had large eyes of an electric blue-gray, the pupils inscribed by a steel-engraved black line. When she spoke, there was at times the trace of a foreign accent, and often in her laugh a series of harsh coarse notes came through.

Before Vergie became her favorite manicurist, she told one of the other girls that she had been married three times, and had lived in various parts of the world. She had owned a pink house on the Riviera from which she had been forced to flee, on a moment's notice, at the outbreak of the war.

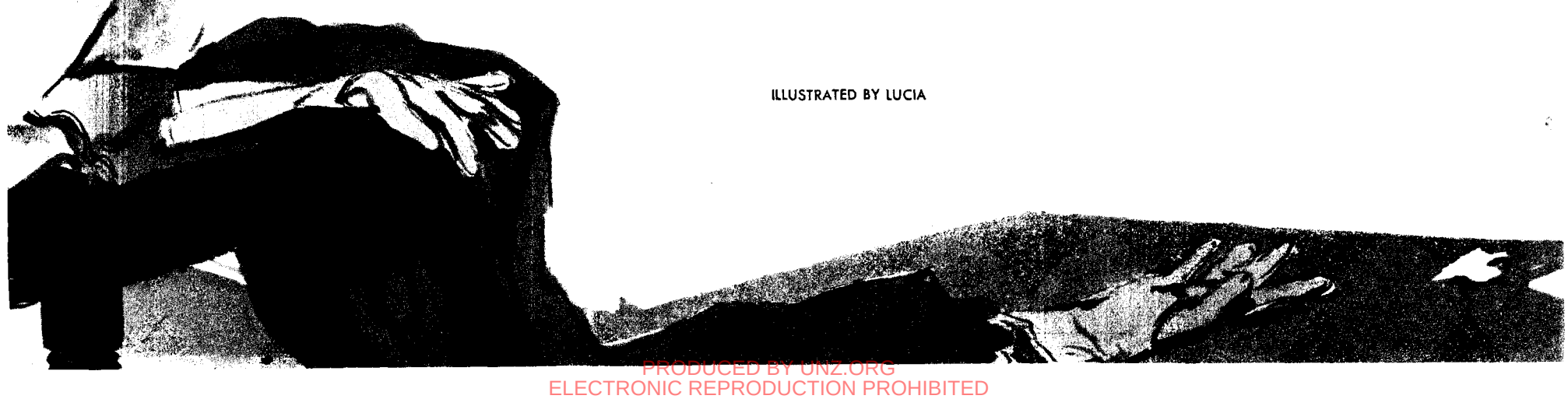
"I walked out," she had said, "with only the clothes on my back. Through letters I found out everything was lost or destroyed. Souvenirs, things I had held onto for years . . ."

She lived now somewhere off Madison Avenue in an expensive apartment hotel. Her living room had a little balcony, and there were flowering plants in it, but aside from these things, they knew nothing about her.

Above the whirring of driers, the mingling of women's voices, the slapping sound of a massage, the trap unexpectedly went off. "Vergie," Mrs. Summers inquired, "did you remember to bring the snapshot?"

Vergie gave a jump. "Oh! Yes! *(Continued on page 47)*

ILLUSTRATED BY LUCIA



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"What a scare you gave me!" Aunt Hazy exclaimed. Vergie saw the black eye, the scattered snapshots

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Test Pilot for
OUR NEW A-BOMB

By RICHARD WITKIN

"Pete" Quesada, a 46-year-old Air Force general, guards secrets like a dragon, works like a beaver on plans for our ninth nuclear blast

EVER since President Truman gave the green light to production of the hydrogen bomb, Lieutenant General Elwood (Pete) Quesada of the Air Force has wished he had the face of a cigar-store Indian. Quesada does not find it easy to freeze his naturally animated features into a blank look, and yet, as commanding general of Task Force Three, scheduled to test this country's latest nuclear bombs at Eniwetok Atoll in the Pacific this spring, he has been forced to resort to a dead-pan expression on many an occasion. It is impossible for him to attend a cocktail or dinner party in Washington without running into a spate of speculation on the H-bomb, and the boss of the top-secret Eniwetok operation has had to watch his step like a defendant on the witness stand.

His own mother, a spry eighty-three, precipitated one of her son's more embarrassing ordeals by asking him a taboo question in the presence of another elderly lady and two of his friends who happened to be reporters. The second lady guilelessly chimed in, and Quesada was pelted with queries. "My friends were all ears and I was all thumbs," Quesada shudders.

Only one assumption apparently can be made with safety: If there are any puzzles about production of an H-bomb still to be solved, our scientists will use the Eniwetok operation to help solve them. Perhaps there will be a test of the new bomb itself. From Quesada: no comment.

The assignment given the forty-six-year-old general—to plan and run off the nation's ninth nuclear bomb test—has involved a formidable variety of tough tasks. He has had to clamp on tight security (at an earlier Eniwetok test, radar picked up what was believed to be a Russian submarine). He has to draft a minutely detailed blueprint for the actual tests (Bikini plans ran to thousands of pages). He has had to set up police and fire detachments and provide for sanitation and communications ("You might say I'll be a regular mayor of the place"). He has to order construction of a water-distilling plant ("New York thinks it has problems; we have a permanent water shortage"). He has had to shop around in purchasing supplies to keep his expenditures as low as possible ("I'm a taxpayer myself").

A veteran fighter pilot, Quesada was tapped for the Eniwetok job by the Joint Chiefs of Staff at a Pentagon conference last summer. They knew he had an abundance of scientific aptitude and administrative talent. But that was the peak period of the unification squabble, and the Eniwetok operation was to be a joint project of the Atomic Energy Commission, the Army, Navy and Air Force. So it was necessary for the man *(Continued on page 64)*

Quesada in his Pentagon office where he directs preparations for the explosion at Eniwetok Atoll

PHOTOGRAPH FOR COLLIER'S BY GEORGE TAMES

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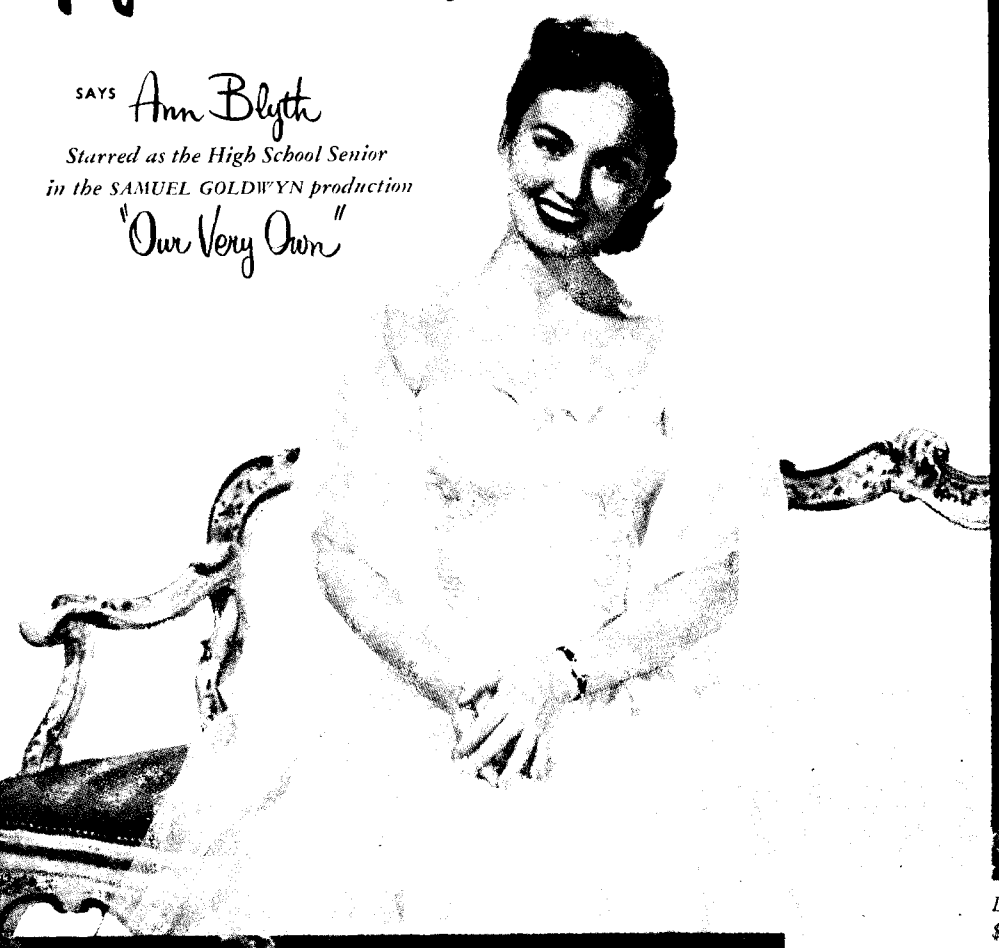
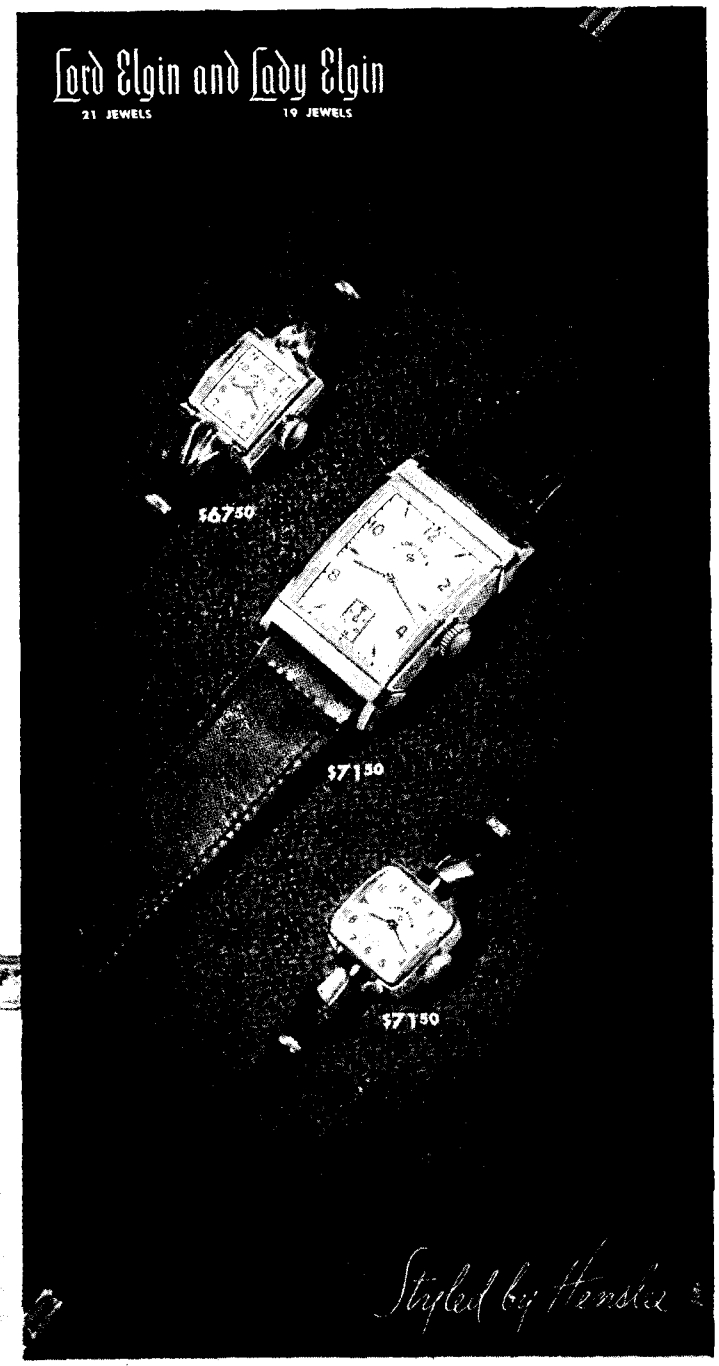
"So lovely... an Elgin belongs in any graduation picture!"

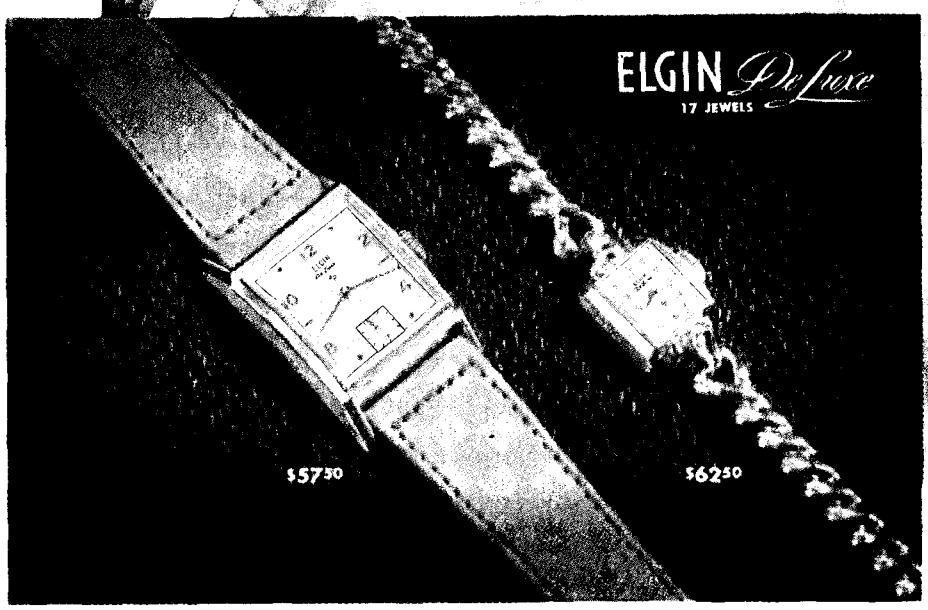
SAYS Ann Blyth

Starred as the High School Senior
in the SAMUEL GOLDWYN production
"Our Very Own"





Lord and Lady Elgins are priced from $67.50 to $5,000. Elgin DeLuxe from $45.00 to $67.50. Other Elgins as low as $29.75, including the Federal Tax



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*Made of "Elgiloy" metal. Patent pending

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Happiness—you give it in greater measure when your graduation gift is an Elgin. For your loved one will be thrilled to wear one of these watches that are so highly praised by America's "best-dressed."

Superb performance is always part of the extra value in every Elgin . . . performance assured by such technical achievements as the DuraPower Mainspring. It eliminates 99% of all repairs due to steel mainspring failures . . . *is the most dependable power for accurate timekeeping ever put into a watch!*

Top all this with the fact that more people *want* an Elgin than any other watch and your graduation gift-seeking becomes easy to finish . . . just see your jeweler for the style-honored new Elgin Watches.

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The Man Who Comes to Breakfast

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

the humor in the interviews depends on the quick wit of McNeill and his cast. A typical bit of byplay occurred recently when he was questioning a young matron. She told him that she had left her infant son at her mother's home and that she was worried because she wasn't sure whether she had given her mother the child's formula. Instantly, Sam Cowling darted to the mike.

"Two parts bourbon, one part vermouth," he piped. "And don't forget the cherry, Mother."

Some mornings neither the interviewees nor the cast seem to have anything amusing or interesting to say. "In fact," McNeill candidly admits, "sometimes we stink. But that's the way the show is. We just have to take what comes."

As measured by McNeill's 10,000 fan letters a month, the more serious parts of the program provoke as much enthusiasm among listeners as the humor. The most unusual of these features is the daily Prayer Time which McNeill opens with the request: "Each in his own words, each in his own way, for a world united in peace—bow your heads—let us pray."

Then, as the lights dim and the orchestra softly plays a hymn, the cast and the studio audience bow their heads for 15 seconds.

Many Inspirational Moments

During a part of the show called Inspiration Time, McNeill reads a poem with a strong moral tone, often one submitted by a fan. Listeners also provide much of the material for Memory Time, on which he reads a letter or little story such as a recent one about a disabled veteran who said he had regained use of his paralyzed legs by sheer will power. (It is a good indication of McNeill's effectiveness that even the stagehands sometimes grow misty-eyed when he reads an especially touching story.) For the Sunshine Shower he gives his listeners the name and address of a hospital, orphanage or old-folks home and asks them to shower the inmates with letters.

The usual result is that the institution named receives many gifts of food, clothing and money.

The frequent comment by supersophisticates that all this is strictly from the fields of Iowa does no damage to McNeill's feelings.

"Of course, we're corny," he agrees. "And why not? Probably most American wit and humor could be called that. As for sentiment, nobody should be ashamed of it. There are too many poker faces in the world today."

Because of the high-and-dry pedestal on which many of his fans have placed him, McNeill has to be extremely careful of "controversial" subjects. Once he dropped a slighting remark about the hats worn by Queen Mary, the mother of England's King George VI. In Canada, where the program is carried by 31 stations, hundreds of listeners showered McNeill with hurt letters of protest. He apologized humbly.

On the other hand, when he lets slip some statement about his personal preferences, the results are overwhelming. Not long ago a woman he was interviewing mentioned that she baked a pretty good lemon meringue pie.

"H'mmm, yum," said McNeill.

Within a few days he received from fans a total of 73 lemon meringue pies.

Running Don a close second in popularity is his combination heckler and stooge, Sam Cowling, who has been clowning daily on the show since 1940. In addition to improvising wisecracks Sam, a stocky, dark-haired, merry-faced, five-foot-six-inches, plays a sort of Jeff to McNeill's Mutt, and is constantly taking prat falls or being thrown off the stage for his effrontery. It's also his job to lead the one-minute March Time romp up and down the studio aisles in which all the kids and many of the older members of the audience join at the beginning of the third period.

Once each morning he is escorted to the mike by a brassy flourish from the orchestra to present one or two items of Fiction and Fact from Sam's Almanac. This consists entirely of brief set gags for which he spends many hours a day racking his brain. Some mornings he still hasn't dreamed one up when he reaches the studio. Usually he has one ready when the time comes, but the show's formula is so elastic that, if he hasn't, the feature is skipped. Samples:

"Men: If you want to avoid falling hair—duck."

"Living with your mother-in-law is like taking a bath. After a while it isn't so hot."

Even after 10 years, these never fail to get laughs. Occasionally, Sam also breaks into song. After such a performance a few months ago, McNeill received one of his most impressive fan letters to date.

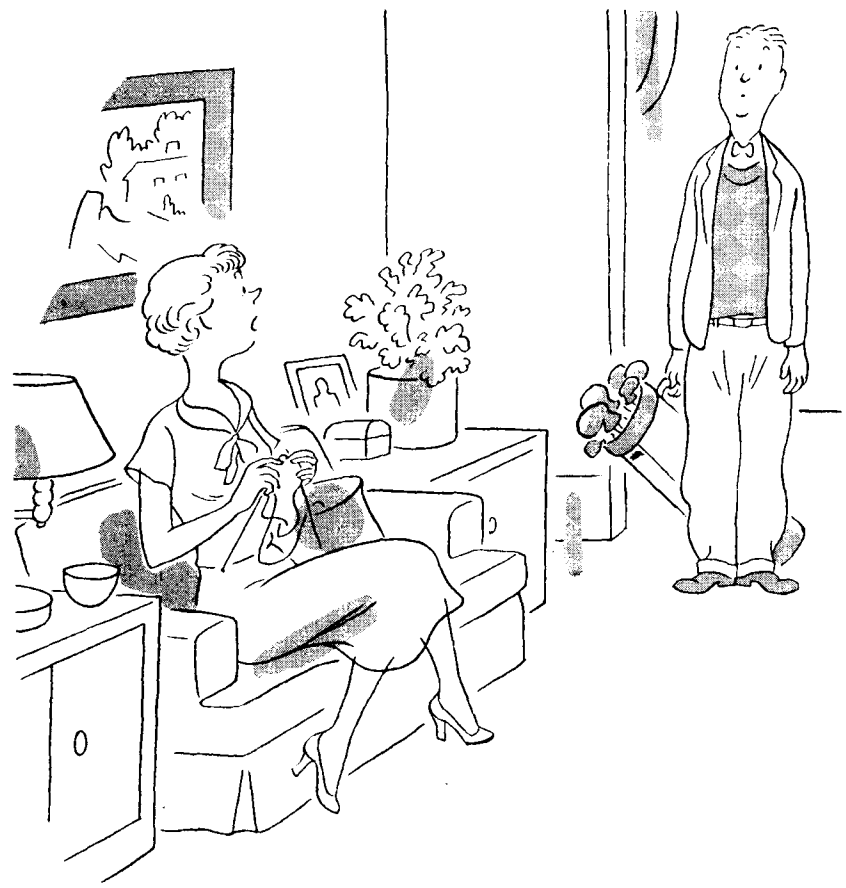
"For the past several weeks," it reads, "I've been in a hospital with 14 broken ribs. As a result I've had a chance to give more time to my favorite radio program, the Breakfast Club, and I'd like to make a suggestion. Why don't you let Sam sing more? I don't know how his voice may sound in your studio, but by the time it gets out here, it's a wonderful cowboy tenor." It was signed by U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas.

All members of the cast take part in the clowning. On stage they constantly confer with one another just out of range of the mike, suggesting gags or asking help in build-ups. If no gags turn up in the spaces between musical numbers and other features, they chitchat about their private affairs—a new coat, the cold someone is catching, their offspring—always with a sharp eye for humorous possibilities.

With the help of McNeill, singers Patsy Lee and Johnny Desmond have developed little gimmicks on which to base their ad-libbing. Patsy's is her hope chest, and her chatter about it has resulted in proposals by the dozen from male listeners, complete with photos and financial statements. Desmond, who signed on the show only last summer, is Johnny on the spot, with a huge kit from which he extracts ear muffs for interviewees who complain of the cold, slippers for Sam's tired feet and so on.

Three days a week Fran Allison, who is also the Fran of the famed video program Kukla, Fran and Ollie (Collier's, March 4, 1950) appears for a brief stint as Aunt Fanny, a gossipy small-town spinster. Like Cowling, she sometimes arrives at the studio with no idea of what she is going to do, but she never yet has failed to come through with some choice tittle-tattle about such fictional neighbors as Bert and Bertie Beerbower, the Smelsers and Ott Ort.

One morning a little more than a year ago McNeill unsuspectingly interviewed on the air an eleven-year-old lad who said he wanted to sing a couple of bars of Galway Bay for his grandparents. At his first note both the audience and the cast were electrified. He sang the whole song at McNeill's urging, and it took two minutes to quiet the applause. His startling voice has the pitch and resonance of a well-trained adult contralto's. That was Bernie Christianson's debut on the show, and he has been appearing twice a week ever since.



COLLIER'S

"A hole in one? You don't get much exercise that way"

NED HILTON

But these five are merely the official members of McNeill's cast. Almost everyone who has anything to do with the show either on stage, backstage or off stage sooner or later finds himself face to face with a live mike. Producer-director Cliff Petersen, for instance, who ought to have his hands full with the hair-tearing job of keeping track of time and cutting or lengthening musical numbers to fit, also joins in an occasional quartet with the singers and bandies words with McNeill in a heavy Swedish accent.

Engineers, stagehands, janitors, even the McNeill family's milkman have got in the act as interviewees. Several members of the 18-man orchestra take part in occasional gags, including baking cakes with a sponsor's products to prove the latter's point that anyone can do it.

Dozens of big-name guests, including Joe Louis, Thomas Hart Benton, Jane Russell and Louella Parsons, have appeared on the show. Occasionally, guests from show business are bemused to the point of being tongue-tied by the lack of script. That didn't happen, however, in the case of Groucho Marx, who was in his element. His rapid-fire wit still is triggered into action at any mention of the program.

"Breakfast Club?" he chortled recently when asked about his appearance on the show. "Fine breakfast club! I never did get any breakfast.

"You know they get up in the middle of the night to put on that program? I don't see how McNeill does it. As a matter of fact, I don't think McNeill does it. I think he stays home and sleeps all morning. I think that's really George Jessel up there, putting on an Ohio accent.

"Have you ever put on an Ohio accent in the middle of the night? Don't. The old-fashioned nightshirt is much more comfortable."

Actually, McNeill's slight Midwestern accent would have to be classified more of the Illinois or Wisconsin variety. Born December 23, 1907, in Galena, Illinois, he moved with his family a few years later to Sheboygan, Wisconsin, where he grew up, went through high school, worked on the school paper and decided that he wanted to be a newspaper cartoonist. He was learning this craft at the journalism school of Marquette University in Milwaukee when his father's Sheboygan furniture factory failed in 1927. Determined to finish college, Don looked around for part-time work and landed a job as staff announcer on a Milwaukee radio station. He has been on the air almost continuously ever since.

Trying to Crash Big Time

By the end of 1932 he had several minor successes under his belt, and accompanied by his wife Kay, a college classmate whom he had married a year earlier, he headed for New York to crash the big time. Mrs. McNeill remembers that episode with considerable distaste. The big time proved obdurate.

"Every Monday while we were in New York," she recalls, "I used to cook a roast. It had to last for the rest of the week. Or as near to it as our appetites could manage. Our bank balance kept skidding straight downhill."

They eventually had to concede temporary defeat, pull up their meager Manhattan stakes and return to Milwaukee. After trying out a few new programs there, McNeill left his wife with her family and, in June, 1933, headed for Chicago. The only thing he could find was a position as emcee of an anemic, six-day-a-week, early-morning sustaining program called the Pepper Pot. It existed solely to fill in the eight-to-nine hour, which hadn't been sold to sponsors. But McNeill thought he saw possibilities in it, and he badly needed a job.

His first act was to change the show's name to the Breakfast Club and to break it up into the four "calls to breakfast." Then, in an inspired moment, he asked permission to ad-lib. Surprisingly, it was granted, though network officials since have admitted that this was chiefly because they were sure no one was listening and it didn't matter much what McNeill did with the show.

This produced no immediate sensation, but the show drew a steadily growing volume of fan mail, then almost the only way of measuring a radio program's audience. Even so, in order to support his growing family McNeill had to piece out his small salary by announcing several other shows during the day and evening. It was not until 1936 that the Breakfast Club really began to gather headway.

Up to that time there had been no live audience. When requests for permission to watch the broadcast began turning up quite frequently in his mail, McNeill decided to

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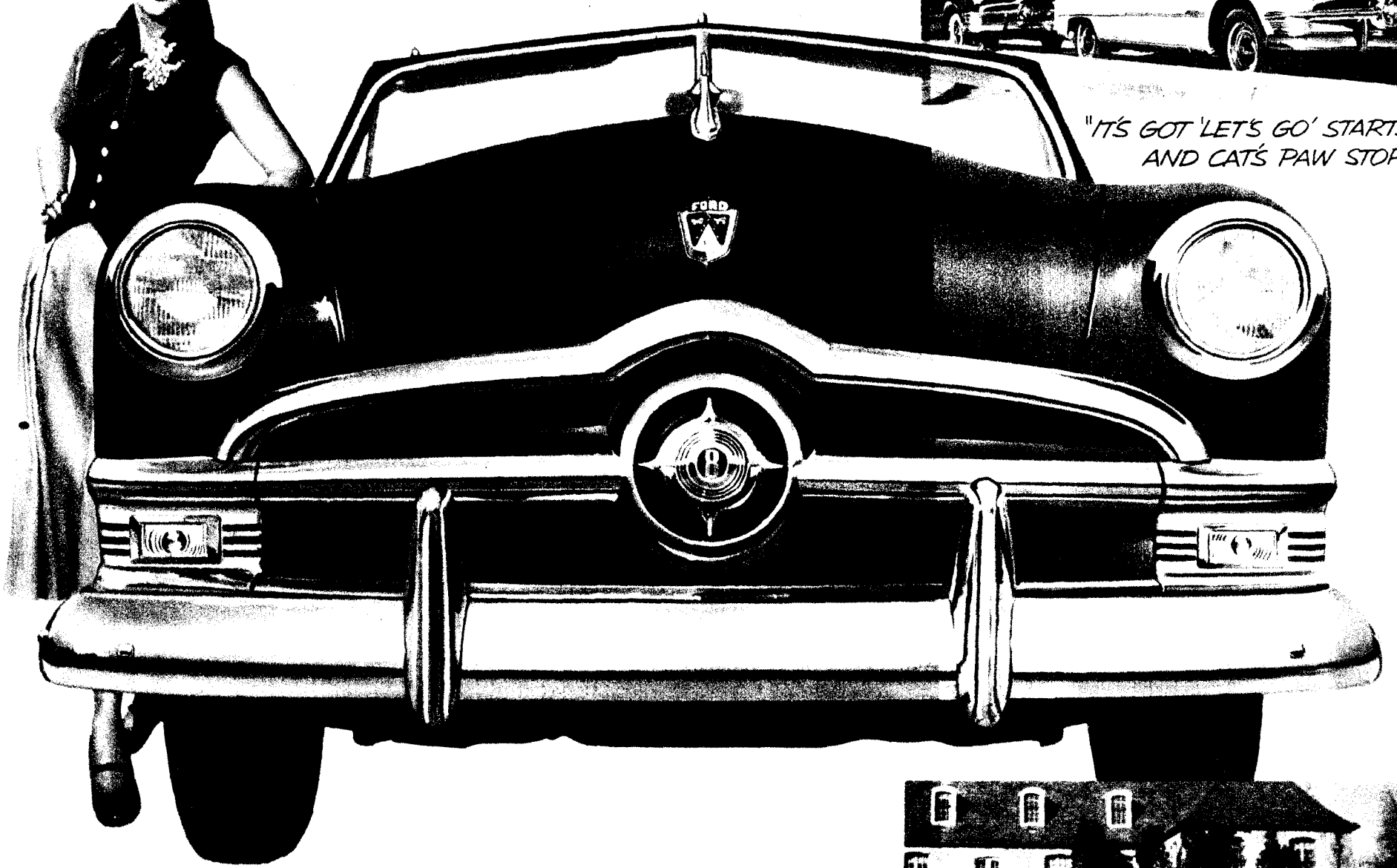
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"TEST DRIVE" A '50 FORD!

"IT SHINES ON DRESS PARADE...
IT PROVES ITS METTLE IN ACTION!"

"IT'S GOT 'LET'S GO' STARTS
AND CAT'S PAW STOPS!"

SEE, HEAR AND FEEL
THE DIFFERENCE



Before you buy any car, your Ford Dealer invites you to "Test Drive" the '50 Ford! "Test Drive" it for power... for comfort... for ease of handling. As for economy—the rapidly growing family of '50 Ford owners has found that this car is designed for top value in original purchase price, and top economy of operation and maintenance. And for looks—well Ford has won the Fashion Academy's Gold Medal again for 1950! See it—"Test Drive" it at your Ford Dealer's today!

"IT TAKES THE MEDAL FOR BEAUTY
AND IT'S BUILT TO LIVE OUTDOORS!"

THERE'S A Ford IN YOUR FUTURE WITH A FUTURE BUILT IN!

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You've probably driven all winter without replacing the element in your oil filter. For the sake of your pocketbook, as well as for better performance, have your service man remove the old filter element and put in a brand new AC.

You will gain two ways: *First,* you will "Dirt-Proof" your engine oil, which means positive protection against the gummy, gritty sludge in your engine oil which clogs and scratches piston rings, valves, and bearings. *Second,* you will enjoy better all-around engine performance.

Your very finest driving season is just ahead. Get ready for it now—and save money, too.

Here's Proof OF "DIRT-PROOF"

More than a pound of sludge, dirt, and grit was removed from oil in 5,000 miles of normal *city* driving. The element was an AC.

HOW YOUR OIL Gets Dirty

Dust is picked up from the road. Metal particles wear off of moving parts. Oil spray oxidizes in the crankcase. Soot and water are produced by burning gases, some of which blow by the piston rings. Water emulsifies with dirt and oil to form sludge. Heat may form gum and varnish.

"Dirt-Proof" your oil as you drive, with an AC Oil Filter or Element.

AC OIL FILTERS

AC SPARK PLUG DIVISION • GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

throw the studio doors open. That, by making the public a part of the show, did the trick. Soon McNeill's employers were so much impressed by the numbers of people willing to get up early just to watch him in action that he was able to give up most of his other chores and reduce the program to five days a week. Because of the early hour, it was another five years before any sponsors could be equally impressed. But today the three current ones are so overwhelmed by what the Breakfast Club does for their products that they spend a total of $4,000,000 a year on its broadcast time and talent.

Over the years McNeill has given a chance to a wide assortment of talent. Several of the acts, such as the Merry Macs and the King's Jesters, have gone onward and upward from the Breakfast Club. But by far the best-known alumni are a couple who spent several months on the show nearly 16 years ago and billed themselves as Toots & Chickie. They currently are known as Fibber McGee and Molly.

A more permanent part of the program has been McNeill's own family. His wife has been appearing now and then ever since the first year to joke about getting him up in the morning and other family problems.

Tickets a Year in Advance

When their oldest son, Tom, now sixteen, was barely a year old, McNeill took him to the studio for his radio debut. Since then Tom and, as they came along, the other two children, Don, fourteen, and Bobby, nine, have turned up regularly on the show, and every year the whole family appears on a special pre-Christmas broadcast for which fans sometimes order tickets a year or more in advance. Not too surprisingly, however, none of the boys has set his heart on a radio career. Tom plans to become an engineer. Don is concerned mostly with football, and Bobby just hasn't made up his mind yet.

At home in Chicago's tony lake shore suburb, Winnetka, the McNeills are almost indistinguishable from any wealthy businessman's family. Their 12-room native stone house is furnished with conservative luxury, and in the frequent intervals between departing and arriving servants Mrs. McNeill efficiently does her own housework. With afternoons as well as week ends off, Don has a little more free time than his neighbors, but he uses it for much the same purposes—mostly fishing, hunting or golfing. On his annual vacation he favors deep-sea fishing in the Gulf of Mexico.

He is neither fanatically dedicated to the importance of himself and his program, nor on the other hand is he cynical. His attitude seems nicely balanced between disarming modesty and sincere belief in what he is doing. Because of this he has turned down several still-standing Hollywood offers.

His only income in addition to his basic contract for the show, estimated at $100,000 plus per year, is for an annual booklet of excerpts from the show, of which he usually sells about 100,000, and for personal appearances. The latter, of which he and the cast make about 10 a year, are confined to week ends and mostly to cities in the Midwest so that the trip easily can be made between the end of the Friday- and the beginning of the Monday-morning broadcasts. Total attendance for the 10 performances, which follow the same format as the broadcasts, usually passes the 50,000 mark.

It is perhaps partly because of his restraint about cashing in on his popularity that McNeill's fans have raised him so far above the category of a mere entertainer. In their letters they address him as a sort of combination benefactor, religious mentor, cracker-barrel sage and friendly neighbor. Occasionally, they wax poetic about him. One woman wrote:

> "It has been said, and rightly so,
> You may be the only Bible some
> folks know."

This sort of thing impresses even hardened old radio hands. "The guy's unique," one of them told an interviewer not long ago. "I swear—if he were to announce that Rita, Aly and Yasmin were going to appear as guests on the show tomorrow morning, a good many people might get up specially to hear it. But a lot of his regular listeners probably would feel a little impatient at the interruption." THE END

COLLIER'S VIRGIL PARTCH

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It takes skill to produce

OLD GRAND-DAD

The mellow, heart-warming flavor of Old Grand-Dad has its source in nature—but only sheer distilling skill could assist nature in producing a bourbon so smooth and satisfying as The Head of the Bourbon Family. The first golden drop that passes your lips will tell you why Old Grand-Dad has become a prime favorite among those who know, and are satisfied only with, the best! Won't you try it—next time?

KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

National Distillers Products Corporation, New York, N. Y.

Head of the Bourbon Family

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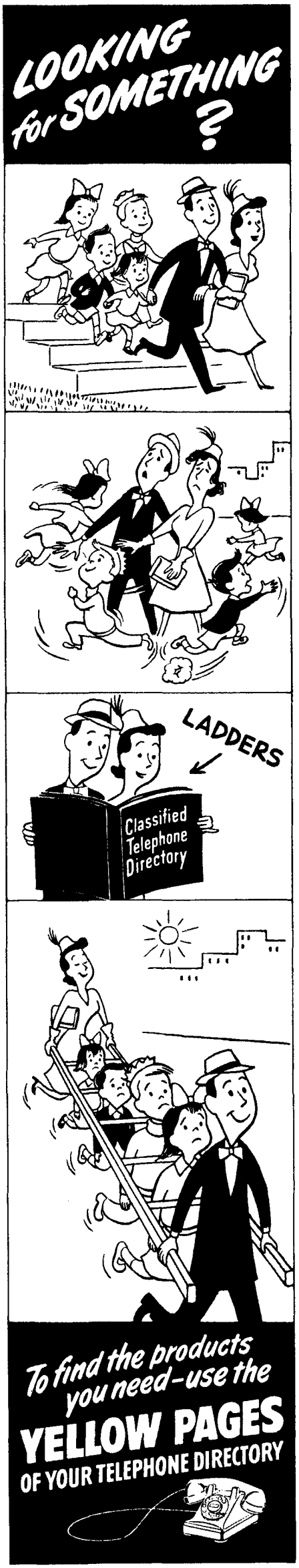


When You Come Home

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

I nodded, numbly. "Wal, lessee, now," he said. "They's right onto thirty acres of corn about ready for layin' by in the bottom. They's some feed an' barley, an' the pasture Ben seeded to lespedeza. Count in the cattle." He scowled fiercely, calculating, and then he peered at me under his thick brows. "I wouldn't take one red penny less than five thousand dollars, George," he said. And he walked out of the pool hall, leaving me thinking about all the things a man could do with five thousand smackers. . . .

Thursday rolled around, a warm day with a strong wind out of the south and high clouds sliding along the sky. And about eleven o'clock, Honey came herding her sedan into town a little too fast; the car was dark green, and I hadn't noticed that fact the one other time I'd seen it. She parked against the curb and something clicked in my mind. "Good-looking woman in a late-model car, dark green," the man at the tourist camp had said. Honey had been the only other occupant of a cabin the night my War Bonds took wing.

I cut across the street and walked up on her side and leaned in the window. She looked hot and a little untidy, but just as voluptuous and man-wise as ever.

"Weren't you going a little fast, honey?" I said.

"Maybe that's it," she said. "Maybe I was rushing things. Was I?"

"You just had bad timing," I said. She appealed to the man in me, all right. "Let me see your driver's license," I said.

She gave me a mocking look of protest. "Am I under arrest?"

"I'm fixing to release you in my custody," I said, grinning. "Let me see your driver's license, just for the hell of it."

"All right, honey," she said. "Anything, just for the hell of it." She opened a shopping-bag-sized purse and started pulling things out of it. She found her driver's license and handed it to me with phony meekness. It was a Texas license. The name was Lucille Andrus, and the home address was El Paso. I handed it back to her quickly, and her face relaxed a little.

"Lucy," I said. "You got to slow down in Clover. You wouldn't want to pay a fine for speeding, would you?"

"Gee, no," she said, and smiled. Then she said, "It's a good day for cold beer." So I walked around and got in the car.

"Bingo," I said. "Where do we get it? Your place?"

"I have no place," she said.

SHE started the car and backed away from the curb. I saw Sarah coming along the shaded side of the street and pretended not to; Lucille (Honey) Andrus tooled her dark green late-model sedan down Main Street to the stop sign, ran the stop sign with a bold smile for me, and turned west on the highway.

I thought she was going to Osage Springs, but she wasn't. Just past the tourist camp there was a package beer store that catered to fishermen. She stopped there and got out and opened the trunk. She had one of those portable iceboxes. She got the man to put a case of beer in it and then graciously allowed me to pay for it, which nicked a big hole in what was left of my thirty bucks.

"Now," she said when we got back in, "we find a shady place."

We found a shady place, where people picnicked along the river. No people were picnicking there at the time. We had a bottle of beer, and she bothered me with her nearness, but I had a few things in my mind about her that puzzled me. I sent up a trial balloon.

"What if your husband found us here?" I said. She held out her left hand, which was ringless. "Your boy friend, then," I said. "As beautiful as you are, Lucy, you're bound to have a jealous boy friend."

She pushed her lips out and gave me a look of exasperation. "Talk, talk, talk," she said. "Are you tired?" She laughed, throatily. "All right, so I've got a boy friend. But it's one of those things without a future."

She put a cigarette between her lips and leaned toward me. "Don't you like me, honey?" she said. "Don't you find me the least little bit interesting?"

She raised her lips, and I accepted the invitation. And then, just when I was about to forget everything my mother ever taught me, she quit. Very casually and calmly she pushed me away and repaired the damage to her lipstick and started the car.

"Is that all there is to it?" I asked.

She nodded. "Honey," she said, "I'm going to be real busy until Sunday night. Then I just haven't got a single damned thing to do. How about Sunday night, honey? I won't be so rushed Sunday night."

"Yeah," I said. "Sunday night, atom bomb."

She snapped her fingers. "Oh, hell, I just remembered. Mama wants to use the car Sunday night. It's really her car, you know."

"I didn't know," I said. "I didn't even know you had a mama. But I just happen to have an old jalopy parked somewhere—probably with the key in it." I was watching closely, but if she reacted to that it was just a very slight and isolated twitch of the skin near her temple—and that could have been her pulse. "Where shall I pick you up?" I said. "And what time? And Sunday is a long time off, honey."

I got that mocking side glance again. "Isn't it?" she said. "Meet me at that joint out on the highway where you frightened my little blind date. About ten, huh? We'll make a real night of it, honey." She gave me the slow, veiled treatment with her dark eyes, so that I didn't fail to understand a night was not necessarily just a night, but was more a matter of personal choice. And endurance. Like at the North Pole.

You know something? I wanted to clear up a few little things with her, like War Bonds and El Paso and being out gadding around with Jud Clymer's kid cousin, but sitting out there on the riverbank with her and having just had a sample of what she could do, I wasn't in any big hurry about those other things. They could wait.

She drove back into Clover and let me out on Main Street, and on a sudden impulse I got my jalopy and tailed her back out of town. She went east on the highway, but not far. She turned south on the river road again. I swung around and went back to town. If you stayed on the river road long enough—about ten or twelve miles—you would eventually get nowhere except Hungry Mountain.

THURSDAY afternoon was notable only because it was the warmest day since I'd been back in Clover, and that night I didn't sleep under my quilt. And then Friday came, bringing unseasonable heat, and everything was dry and hot and badly in need of rain. I went down to the newspaper office to get a copy of the Clover Transcript, feeling better because now the ad would be in the hands of local prospective buyers. And Ann Woodruff reminded me that we had a dinner date for Saturday night. She said she had a lovely roast of venison out of their home freezer, thawing.

"I'm sorry to report that Sarah can't make it, though," Ann said, watching me from the corner of her eye. "She's got a date with some galoot in Osage Springs and can't break it, she said."

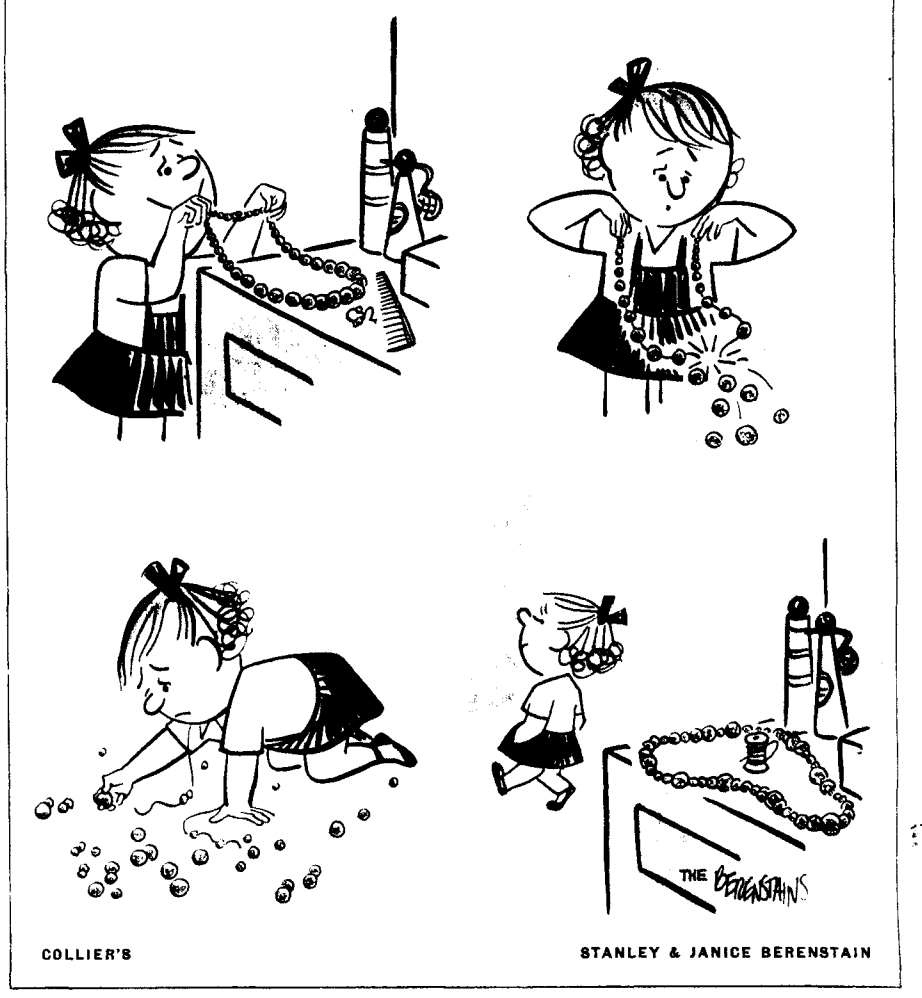
"That's too bad," I said. And I felt a little let down.

Late that evening I drove out to Charley's house. He'd just got in from work at the sawmill, and was washing up. "How you making out, lawman?" he greeted me.

"There is no more crime in Clover," I said. "All the thugs, rapists, thieves and dope peddlers have scuttled to their holes."

"How about drunks?" he said. "They giving you any trouble?" I shook my head,

SISTER



COLLIER'S

STANLEY & JANICE BERENSTAIN

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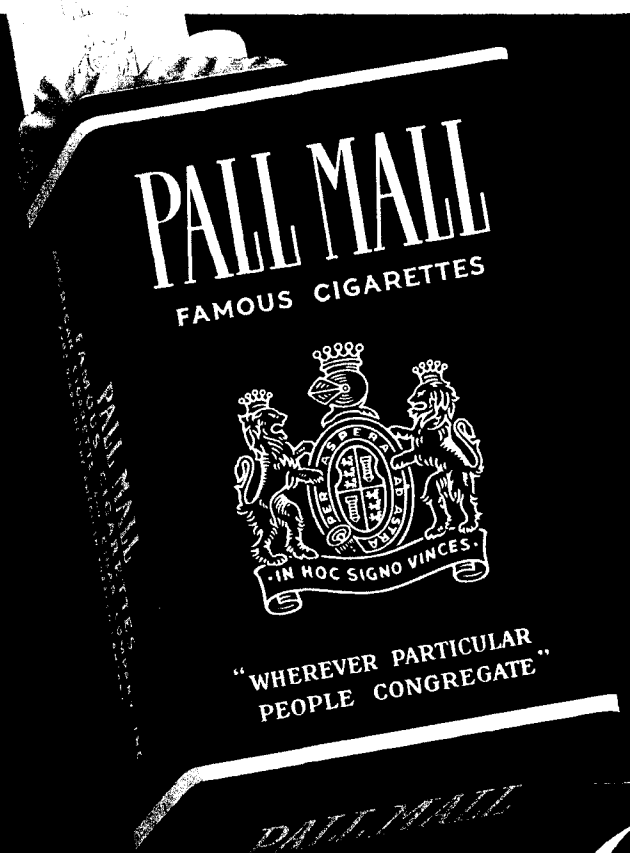
GUARD AGAINST THROAT-SCRATCH

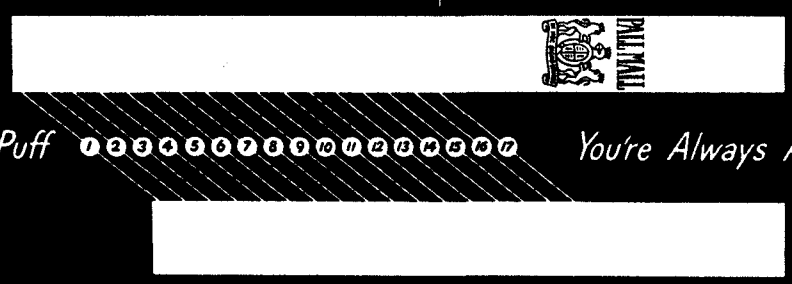
enjoy smooth smoking

PALL MALL's
greater length of fine tobaccos
travels the smoke further...
filters the smoke
and makes it mild



PUFF BY PUFF... YOU'RE ALWAYS AHEAD

Take 5 puffs *or 10...* *or 17...* when you smoke PALL MALL



Study the puff chart! At the first puff, PALL MALL's smoke is filtered further than that of any other leading cigarette. Moreover, after 5 puffs of each cigarette—or 10, or 15, or 17—PALL MALL still gives you a longer, natural filter of fine tobaccos—guards against throat-scratch.

Outstanding...and they are mild!

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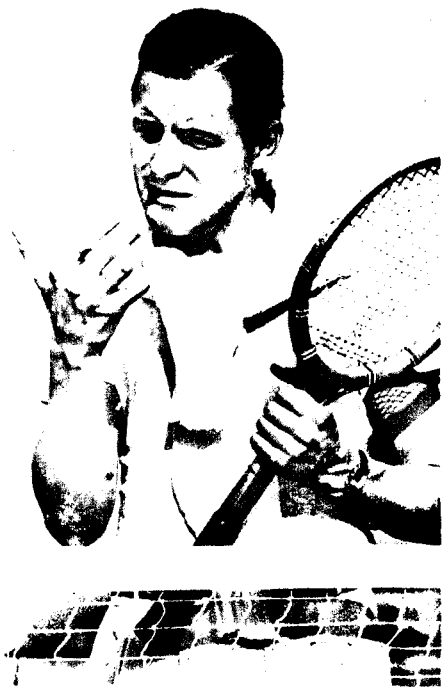
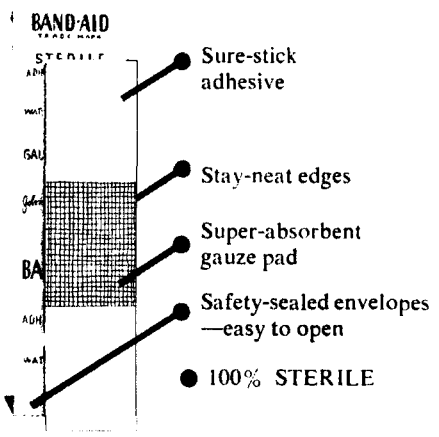
Never neglect a blister



The tiniest injury can become infected. Never take a chance!

Always use BAND-AID*—the only adhesive bandage that gives you all this protection.



Caution: Not all adhesive bandages are BAND-AID. Only Johnson & Johnson makes BAND-AID — used by more families and doctors than all other brands combined.

Always look for the name on the box

*BAND-AID MEANS MADE BY

Johnson & Johnson

and he grinned broadly. "Wait'll Saturday night, Sarge. Drunks don't generally get going good until Saturday night."

"I look for a quiet night," I said. "Real quiet."

"I'll keep my fingers crossed," he said, rolling his sleeves down. "I'm off Sunday. If it don't rain, let's go fishing—and if it does rain, let's go squirrel hunting."

"Sure," I said, grinning. "Like old times, huh, boy?" And then I looked at him and he looked at me. In the old days, there were three of us who hunted and fished together.

"Charley," I said quietly, "remember how we used to hunt swamp rabbits? Jump one up and let the dogs chase him and just stand there and wait, because we knew he'd swing in a big circle and come back to where he started from? And most of the time the dogs would lose the trail?"

Charley gave me a wary, puzzled frown. "What about it?"

"Nothing," I said. "Except that I don't believe Jud is in Mexico."

"You're nuts," he said harshly.

"Maybe I am," I said. "But Jud isn't. At least he isn't nuts enough to send post cards, if he intended to stay in Mexico long."

He was still frowning at me. "You know they got a reward on him?"

It was my turn to scowl. "All right," I said. "What does it mean?"

"Nothing," he said with a wry, faintly apologetic grin. "Except that all I know is what I read in the papers, and the papers say Jud is in Mexico. And if I didn't think he was and considered myself his friend, I wouldn't go around sounding off in public about it."

"I never sound off in public," I said. "I'll see you Sunday, boy."

He nodded, and I went to the door, and he said, "Don't worry too much about the drunks, Sarge. I look for a quiet Saturday night myself."

"I wasn't worried," I said, and we grinned at each other and were back on easy footing again. I went out to the car and drove on home, and sat around the telephone all evening reading a book and waiting for some well-heeled character to call up and say he wanted to buy the farm. I got tired of waiting about eleven, and went to bed.

NOBODY broke any laws in Clover on Saturday. The farmers were all in town, standing around in the shade bemoaning the lack of rain, and some of them shook my hand and wondered whereall at I'd been since they last seen me, and I was foolishly pleased that they remembered me.

In the afternoon a couple of beered-up young farmers got a little obnoxious in the pool hall, but they were reasonable guys and said they reckoned they'd had too much to drink, and they'd get on their horses and go home. Several people spoke of the farm, in passing, but nobody tried to acquire it.

About sundown I went home and filled a tub with water and had a cooling bath, and shaved. Then I put on the best suit I owned and drove back to town to have venison with the editor and his wife.

They lived in an old house in the west end of town, a block north of the high school and not far from the Baileys. Their house was fixed up nice and comfortable, and they were very proud of it. After I met Betty, their seven-year-old daughter, and Bob's mother, a pleasant, plump woman with a sense of humor, who looked after the house for them, Bob and Ann showed me around, explaining how they had done most of the remodeling themselves.

"Someday," Ann said dreamily, "we're going to have a big old ranch-style house built of native stone, with a huge fireplace and big picture windows, and a grove of oak trees all around it."

"And at least five acres of land," Bob said. "I get a big honk out of fooling around with a garden and berries and stuff. I'd like to have one of those midget tractors that have all the attachable equipment, and do a little farming on a very small scale. Shucks, a man could have chickens and a cow and some beehives, and raise all the stuff he needed in his spare time."

His mother came out of her room with Betty, both dressed to go out. "There's a Western at the Bijou," she said. "Youall have fun your way, and we'll have fun our way. We'll try to get back—"

She was interrupted by a knock at the front door, and Sarah Bailey came into the room. "Hi, everybody," she said. "Am I still welcome? I got stood up."

Bob's mother and Betty went on out, saying good night. Ann chatted for a moment and then excused herself to go look at the roast. Bob decided you shouldn't trust the cooking of wild game to women, and went to supervise Ann. Sarah and I were alone.

She had on a dress of some heavy, clinging material that showed off her curves and made me feel self-conscious.

"Cigarette?" I said.

"Thank you," she said.

"Light?" She bent to the flame of my lighter. She inhaled and blew out smoke distractedly and backed up to a chair and sat down on the edge of it, leaning forward.

Bob called from the kitchen. "Beer in the icebox, people."

"Beer?" I asked her, and she gave a little involuntary shudder and made a face, but then she said, "Well, why not?"

I went in the kitchen and got two glasses of beer and two coasters. "Wasn't that a pleasant surprise?" Ann whispered to me.

"Oh, my, yes," I whispered back. I took the beer into the living room. I sat down on the divan and stared at Sarah as she sipped her beer absently.

There didn't seem to be much point in kidding myself any longer. All Sarah Bailey had to do was crook her little finger. Any little finger. That's all I was waiting for.

"You like venison?" I asked uneasily.

"Yes," she said. She sipped her beer and studied a framed print on the wall for half a minute, and then she said, "Do you?"

"I never ate any," I said.

We sat there drinking our beer and smoking our cigarettes. *She's just a cute, naïve kid,* I told myself. There was no rebuttal. *You are physically attracted to her.* No fuss about that, either. *You'd like dearly to have an affair with her.* Come now, must we put it so crudely? However, no rebuttal. *But you don't intend to try.* Check. *You don't really, sincerely, want to marry her and protect her from everything but you, forever and ever, amen.* Rebuttal! All of a damn' sudden, rebuttal!

"I do too," I said out loud.

"Do too what?" she said, looking startled.

"Think you look terrific in that dress," I said.

She flushed. "I was afraid it might be a little too—too—"

"It is," I said. "That's why you look so terrific."

She stared at me with outraged eyes and put her hand over her mouth and kept staring, with something happening in her eyes, and then, all at once, she broke up. She leaned back in the chair and shook with laughter, and it was very interesting. She could laugh, all right. It wasn't shrill, either. Nice, throaty laughing.

BOB came beaming in from the kitchen, smiled approvingly at us, and said it would be only a matter of minutes until dinner now. *He lighted a cigarette and the conversation got very general.* But every once in a while Sarah's eyes would tangle with mine, and she'd giggle.

The venison was excellent, and the table talk was light and carefree. After dessert we took our coffee into the living room. *What's so terrifying about this kind of permanency?* I asked myself.

Bob put records on the record player, and we sat there feeling comfortably stuffed, smoking and drinking coffee, and I thought that maybe in California there was a bungalow with my name on it, after all. Not for a long time, but maybe eventually.

The womenfolk went in to clean up the mess, and Bob gave me his best chamber-of-commerce pitch with Clover's wonderful delights, and I listened politely. But my mind was out in the kitchen, helping Sarah with the dishes. Or hindering her. When he ran out of propaganda, Bob editorialized about the recent rash of mild crime.

"There is a lot of loose talk going around," he said, "to the effect that Charley Rainfall—who is, I believe, a friend of yours, George—is somehow involved with those two robberies. Of course it's mostly Morgan, the druggist. He hates Charley's insides because Charley ran him out of the pool hall one day."

Bob pointed his cigarette at me, making a point. "Charley, by the way, was cold sober at the time." He grinned. "Anyhow, Morgan claims he saw Charley in town late the night you took him home early—the night the hardware store was broken into. And you'd be surprised how many people are anxious to believe the worst of anybody,

COLLIER'S

"He was very dramatic—he said if I didn't marry him he'd marry somebody else!"

KATE OSANN

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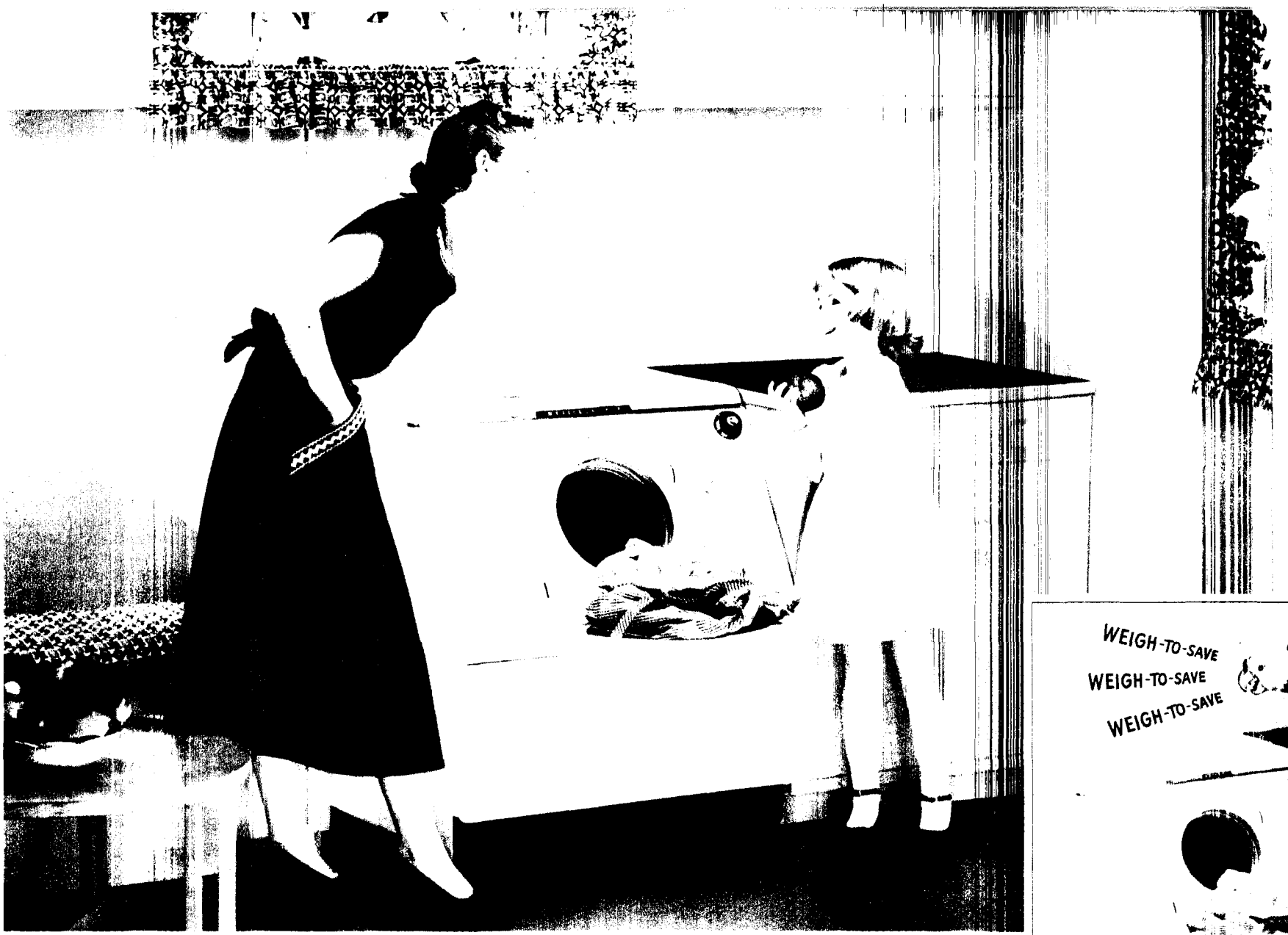

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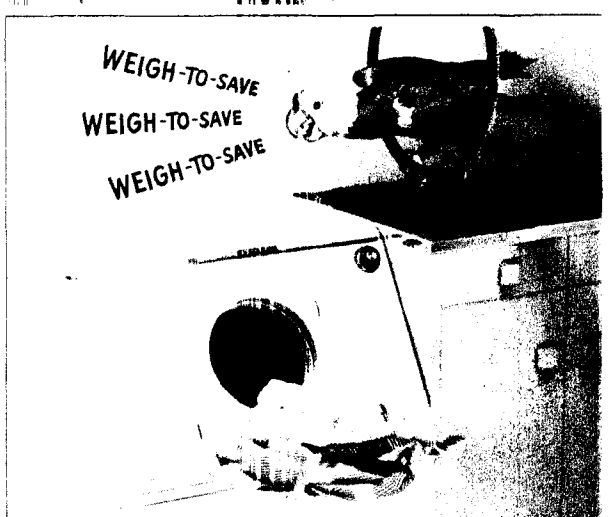

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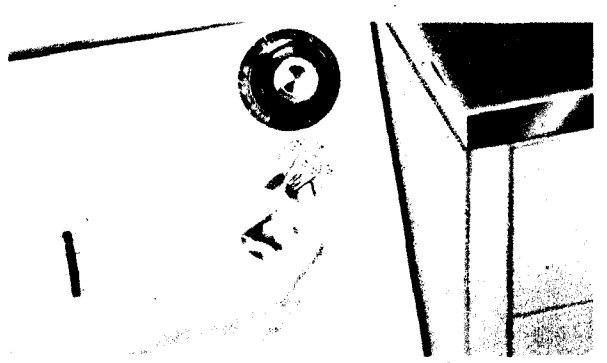

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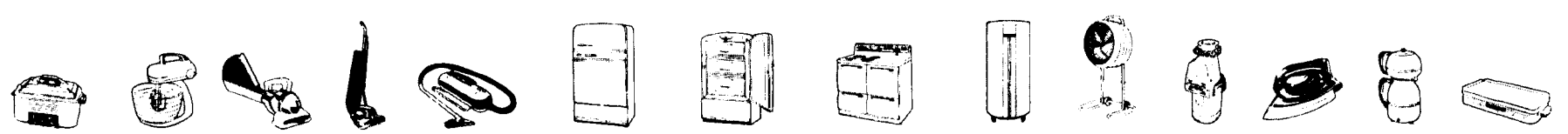

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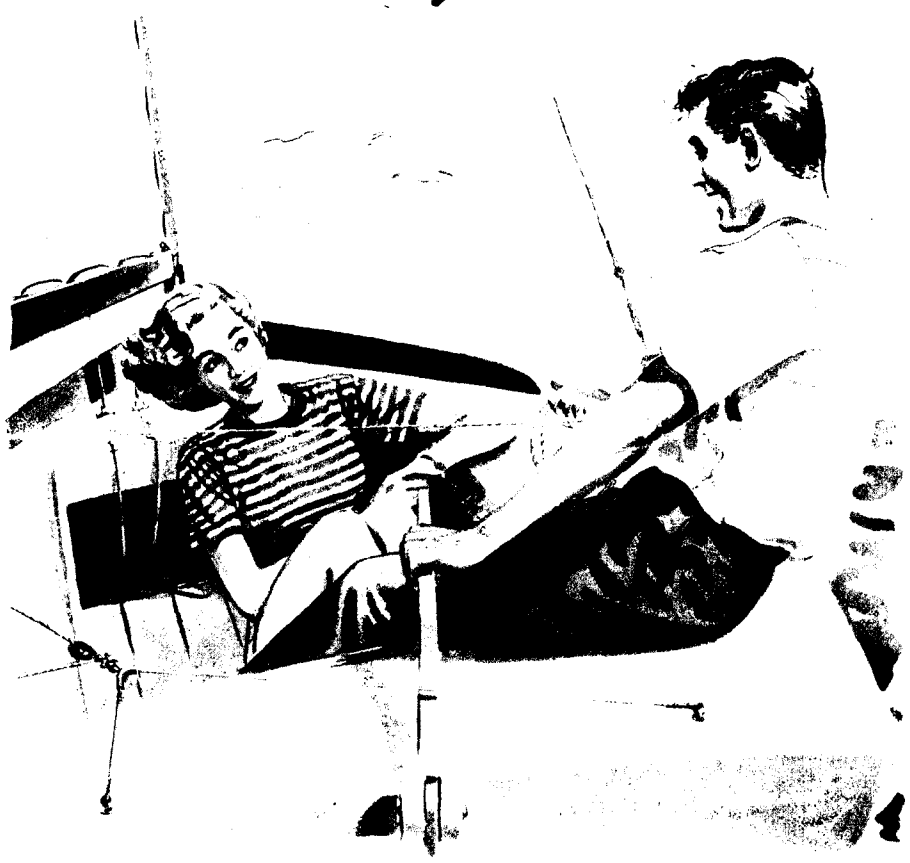

"Around the world! Not in this tub, Skipper! Not ever!"

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George." He flicked the ash from his cigarette and added dryly, "Especially about an Indian."

"Charley wouldn't steal," I said. But I was saying it for my benefit, because I knew he had got up and gone out to howl at the moon, as his father said, after I put him to bed that night, and a man is capable of very foolish acts when he's that plastered.

"Human nature is a funny thing," Bob said. "Unpredictable."

THE girls came back and we played canasta and had a hell of a fine time, although the women beat us badly. Bob's mother and Betty came home and went to bed, and we had beer and played some more canasta, and then it was midnight. I had been looking forward to midnight. It was in all ways a fine, memorable evening, but what I had been looking forward to was midnight and the party breaking up, and me being with Sarah without chaperons.

"George, will you see that Sarah gets safely home?" Ann said.

"Sure," I said. Sarah gave me a nervous look and bit a fingernail, and caught herself doing it, and blushed slightly.

So we said good night and went out and got in the car. "You don't have to go right home, do you?" I said. She said no. So I started the car and drove west and swung back south and then east to the schoolhouse. I stopped the car and killed the engine and pointed at the gym. "I used to play basketball there," I said.

"I know it. I used to watch you."

"I was pretty good," I said, modestly.

"Yes," she said. "You were awfully good."

We sat there without talking for a minute, and there was lightning in the south, sheet lightning. The lightning flickered again, and I looked at Sarah and her white face was turned to me in the darkness.

"Sarah," I said. "Tell me about you and Jud."

She was very still for a moment, and then she asked, softly, "You mean, did I love him?" That's what I meant, all right. That's what was really worrying me.

"I guess that's what I want to know."

"Would you believe me if I said I didn't, George?"

"I'd believe you," I said, watching for the lightning.

"I loved him, George," she said in a rush. "I was barely eighteen, but I loved him—until I found out what he was really like."

"What was he really like?" I said.

She seemed to be trying to find the right, exact words. "He was . . . kind of rotten inside, George. He didn't care about anybody, really. I don't think he even cared about himself. He never said he loved me, but he'd make me say I loved him. He'd try to make me drink with him, and he lied to me all the time—about just anything. He'd make me cry, and then he'd laugh at me, George."

I was waiting for the lightning to strike me. "Yes?" I said.

"I never talked to anybody else about Jud. Dad made me stop seeing him, and after a while I was all right. I got over the —the kind of awful spell he had on me. After a while I knew that all the good he had was on the outside, and all inside him was bad and rotten and horrible."

"How do you feel about him now?"

She didn't hesitate. "I don't feel anything about him," she said. "Maybe I pity him because he probably can't help being the way he is, but that's all. George, did you know he uses dope?"

"Dope?" I said. "Jud?"

"Yes," she said. "Marijuana—whatever he can get."

"I didn't know that," I said.

And then she said, "George, please look at me."

I looked at her and she came toward me a little, hesitantly, and that did it. I moved over and reached, and she met me halfway, warm and yielding and a little violent. "I've been so miserable," she said.

"I've been a little upset myself," I said, my face against her clean, fragrant hair. And then I did what I'd been aching to do since I first saw her in Morgan's drugstore. I got a handful of hair and pulled her head back and kissed her. At first her lips were soft and cool and unsure, but then they were warm and alive and very sure. It was different from kissing Honey. Much better.

"George," she said, shakily, "you're not—you really *mean* it?"

"From now until hell freezes over," I said.

"You'll take me back with you when you go?" she asked, and her voice was anxious and uncertain. Maybe even a little skeptical. And it took just a little of the edge off of things for me. I said, "Baby, I wouldn't go a step without you, from now on."

Sarah drew back and looked at me. "George, you know what I thought?" I shook my head. "I thought you were avoiding me because Dad told you to—and I knew you wouldn't let him keep you from seeing me if you really wanted to. It was awful."

I kissed her again, but even while I kissed her, when I should have been wrapped up in my work, I was thinking uneasily: Maybe it's not you, really. Maybe it's mostly California. Maybe it's mostly escaping from Clover, and her bad memories of Jud, and she's using you to escape and doesn't even know it herself.

Maybe she had herself fooled, because she was so young and discontented and—gullible. I worried about it. I brooded and fretted and ached about it. But you can't think along those lines very long when you're kissing a girl like Sarah, so after a while I stopped.

I said, "What about your father, baby?"

"Leave him to me," she said. She looked happy; she sounded happy.

So we didn't pay any attention to the curfew. After all, who goes home early on Saturday night? When I finally drove her home it was after two, and the lights were out. I walked her to the door and stood there trying to see her in the dark, trying to see if she was still happy.

"George," she said. "I wasn't really stood up tonight."

"I knew that," I said. "Nobody could stand you up, baby."

"I just—I thought I didn't want to see you again."

"That was crazy," I said. "But I had the same idea, sort of."

"People are morons, aren't we?" she said. She put her hands up to my face and held me still, looking at me. "George," she said very softly, "there hasn't ever been anybody else. Not like this. Not like us."

She wants it to be right, I thought. She *wants* it to be. But I just didn't believe it was really me. It was only partly me—the rest of it was escaping, getting away from Clover and all that reminded her of Jud.

I was a grown man, I could figure things out for myself. I wasn't a kid. I'd had Sarah figured out for a long time. But I didn't have me figured out, because now I knew I'd accept it that way. I'd risk her waking up some morning and realizing she'd wanted to get away so bad she hadn't cared whom she got away with.

"Sarah," I said, "I won't ever let you be unhappy again, if I can help it. If it's in my power."

"It's in your power," she said. "Kiss me good night, darling."

I kissed her good night.

WHEN I got home, I couldn't go to sleep, and I heard the thunder roll closer. I heard the first patter of rain, and then the good drumming sound. I could smell the rain soaking into the dry ground. But I was busy thinking ahead. A G.I. student under Public Law 16 with a beautiful wife and five thousand bucks could make out all right at UCLA, studying—well, studying *something*. Or we could buy that boat and go on a permanent honeymoon cruise, living on my disability checks and squid sandwiches. The world was my oyster, and Sarah was my pearl. . . .

Sunday morning I felt so domestic that I made biscuits to go with my bacon and eggs, and whistled all the time I did it. After

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breakfast I hunted up my old single-shot .22-caliber rifle, but I couldn't find any bullets for it in my room. So I went in my father's room and looked for .22 shells—partly because I thought there might be some, and also partly because I wanted to make it clear to myself that I was not uneasy about going in his room.

There was a picture of him on the chest of drawers, taken when he was about forty. I opened the top drawer, and there was a cluster of junk in it—a pair of old steel-rimmed glasses, a couple of pipes, a stem-winding watch, a tobacco pouch and some stubs of pencil and a few snapshots. There was also a stack of clean envelopes that hadn't been used, and a stack of cheap stationery that had been used. I picked up the top sheet and glanced at it, and it was an unfinished letter, and it started out, "Dear George." I dropped it like a hot coal and slammed the drawer shut. I found part of a box of shells in another drawer.

CHARLEY was ready when I drove up after him. He had all of the dogs tied up but one, which I assumed was his squirrel dog.

"Come on in," Charley said. I went inside, and the old man was sitting by the window staring out toward the woods, and he didn't stir when I entered. Charley winked

"All you have to do is give him a sweet smile, tell him how cute he is, and pat him on his bald spot. That's how I got *my* raise"

COLLIER'S JOHN NORMENT

at me. "Old Indian says if we get a good mess of fat young red squirrels, he'll cook them for our supper."

"We better get some, then," I said.

The old man grunted and went on staring out the window, and Charley opened an old upright clothes cupboard and took out a bright, expensive-looking pump shotgun, and before he closed the door I saw another one like it. He looked at me. "You got a gun, Sarge?"

"My old bolt-action .22," I said.

"That's better for squirrels than a shotgun," he said. "But the only rifle I got is a .30-30. Too big."

"Yeah," I said, watching him take shells out of a box and put them in his pocket. His eyes were as blank and flat and beady as his father's always were. All right, I thought. *Shotguns were taken from the hardware store.* I made myself stop thinking.

"I got a shotgun for Old Indian, but he don't hunt much any more," Charley said. "Can't hit anything. Bad eyes."

"Eyes still plenty good for throw somethin' at loudmouth boy," the old man said without turning from the window. "Go git them squirrel."

Charley laughed and went out the door, and I followed him. He put the squirrel hound back of the seat, and we got in the car, and I felt depressed about that shotgun of Charley's. The druggist had a fine rumor spreading through the town about Charley being seen around the night the hardware store was broken into, and now I knew there were two fine new-looking pump shotguns in Charley's possession.

We drove down to the river bottoms and let the hound out and began to follow him slowly. It reminded me of any number of times when we had hunted swamp rabbits and squirrels there. But then there'd been three of us most of the time. Jud and Charley and me. Now Jud was a hunted man, and Charley was having his name linked to a couple of robberies. And I was a reluctant town marshal, worrying about a pair of stolen shotguns.

All I owed Charley was everything—now I couldn't even muster up a little confidence in his integrity. Some fine friend, I was.

"After that rain they ought to be out this morning," Charley said, and his eyes glittered with the pleased excitement of squirrels to be hunted, and I caught a little of it then myself. You can't hunt properly and brood about things at the same time, so I stopped brooding. Instead of brooding, I let all the familiar places drag up memories that I'd thought were buried for good.

The thick timber of the bottom was cool after the rain, and I was glad I'd stuck around long enough to spend this day on the river with Charley, and I didn't resent all of the memories it pulled out of the dusty files of my mind. They were pretty good memories. Fishing and hunting and swimming memories. Hot summer-day memories, and seeing up ahead at the bend the willow tree trembling violently in the gray morning, activated by the trotline fastened to its branch, and by the big channel cat on the line, trying to break loose. Duck wings whistled in the rain-dark morning in my mind, and big frogs waited too long in the mud and collapsed with the hinges of their backs snapped by .22 slug or smooth slingshot rock.

I remembered going gigging in a borrowed boat on moonless summer nights with Jud and Charley when there was no wind and the eerie glare of our carbide miner's lamps reflected on the misty black water. Charley had been deadly with a gig—and later he'd been deadly with a rifle and a silent commando knife. Jud never was a hand with a gig—*or* a paddle. He preferred to sit amidships and watch Charley do the gigging, while I paddled. I didn't know what kind of a Marine he'd made, either. Maybe he was deadly with a skillet.

I remembered rainy days in the bottoms similar to this day, and soft-stepping in the spongy leaf mulch, hunting the fast and wary gray squirrels. I remembered an awful lot of things about the Osage river bottoms, and they were things I was sorry I'd ever forgot. It brought back all the sudden warm rush of boyhood loyalty, the feeling Charley and Jud and I had for one another. I thought sadly of Jud—and how he'd got fouled up.

WE HUNTED the bottoms and moved out to the timbered bluffs where the big red squirrels lived, and the hound treed again and again, and by late afternoon we had all the squirrels we could use. We started the long walk back to the car. Charley and I walked quietly, not talking and not needing talk. When we were in sight of the car he finally broke the friendly silence.

"Wish you were going to be here a while, Sarge," he said.

I didn't get it at first. It hadn't even occurred to me yet that *three* of us couldn't go back together; I hadn't thought that far ahead. Now, finding the meaning of his words, I thought: *He read your mind. He's rejecting you because you doubted about the shotguns.* But before the thought was finished, he had gone quietly on.

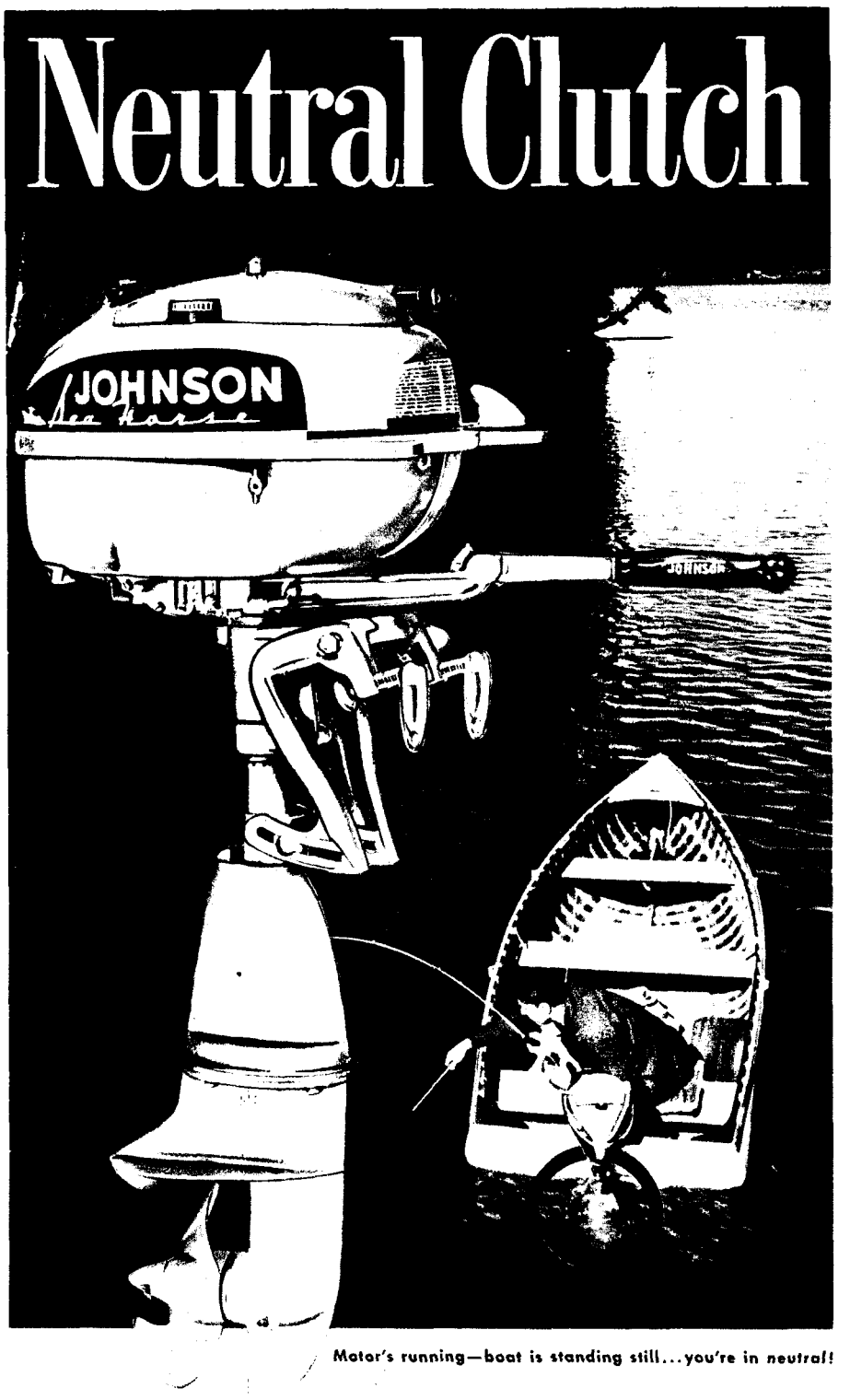
"Sarge, your being here has sort of straightened me out. I haven't wanted to get drunk. There isn't as much to get drunk about, maybe. It isn't just because you're the law. Hell, with me it would be the other way. You're about the first cop I ever liked."

He grinned at me, and I grinned back.

"You understand what I'm trying to say?" he asked. "I don't."

I thought maybe I did, in a way. Maybe because he had no true friend around Clo-

Neutral Clutch



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ver, he was victim to a terrible loneliness, and resented that loneliness. He came back from the war thinking he'd proved himself, and found he was still Charley Rainfall. "Hey, Chief!" the kids used to call him in school. "Hey, Chief Rain-in-the-face!" One thing I always admired about him: he'd never lost his pride, he'd never laughed with the mob at his own expense, he hadn't allowed himself to be made ridiculous. I envy the shabbiest old Indian alive his dignity.

We reached the car and put the dog inside and got in and sat there, smoking and looking out across the bottoms. Charley blew smoke at the windshield and said, in an odd, soft voice, "I've kinda lost touch with the river, Sarge. I think I'll get me some trotlines. Maybe next winter I'll start trapping again like we used to do. Ought to be lots of muskrat and mink in here. Guy might earn some scratch and have a little fun at the same time."

I STARTED the car and turned around and drove west, toward town and the place in the clouds where the sun was spreading silver stain. After a while Charley threw his cigarette out the window.

"Sarge," he said. "I'd like to go back with you, if it was just me. But there's Old Indian. I'm all he's got." He was watching the road ahead, as if he'd lost something on the way out and hoped to find it on the way back, and presently he added, "I guess he's all I got, too."

The son and father relationship, so I'd heard, could be a warm and binding and unselfish thing. But how in hell could I have known?

I stopped at my place to call Sarah and tell her I was having supper with Charley and his dad.

She said that I'd picked a good night for it, because she had to work anyhow. "Mabel's mother is bad sick over at Osage Springs," she said, "I've got to work her shift. I love you. Do you still love me?"

"I still love you," I said. "When do you get off work?"

"I work from ten tonight until six tomorrow morning, darn it."

"Then I'll come on home to bed when I finish eating fried squirrel," I said, and she said it wasn't a good idea, but it was probably more sensible than coming to the café and sitting there watching her sling hash.

I knew I was breaking my date with Honey at the roadhouse. I didn't regret it. There wouldn't be any more Honeys in my young life.

Old Indian had an untidy appearance and smelled like campfires and buffalo robes, but he could turn out fried squirrel fit for a king. The coffee was strong enough to float a spoon, and the sourdough bread was at least unique. I told Old Indian he'd make someone a fine squaw, and he laughed. Charley said he laughed once a month, just to stay in practice.

After supper the old man went to bed, and I helped Charley clean up, and then we sat around the cold potbellied stove talking. I got a bottle out of the car and we had a few drinks, but he was the old Charley now. He didn't drink as much as I did. It was after eleven when we finally began to run out of conversation, and I got up to leave. The wind had come up strong, and the night was black and stormy outside.

It was eleven thirty when I went to bed.

It was five minutes after one o'clock on that bitter night when the phone woke me up, and Roy Bailey's profane and slightly incoherent voice told me that the café had just been held up by two masked men with shotguns.

In spite of the hour, word seemed to have got around by the time I got to town. A handful of people were milling around in front of the café, jabbering excitedly, and as I got out of the car I heard more feet pounding down the street. I opened the door and stepped inside the café, and a nasal voice was saying, "What kind of *town* marshal is he, living five miles in the country? Everybody in town will be here by the time he arrives." It was Morgan, the druggist, and he stopped abruptly, seeing me, his face tight with disapproval.

It looked like he was right, at that. The mayor and Bob Woodruff were there, sleepy and troubled, and Roy was behind the counter, pants and coat over his pajamas. Sarah was there, too, white-faced and with eyes red from crying. There were several other men sitting quietly at the counter. And they all looked at me expectantly. They were badly misinformed if they thought I knew what I was doing there.

I sat down next to Sarah, waiting for someone to say something. *What do they think I can do?* I wondered. Sarah's gray eyes were on me, wide and shocked.

"Did anybody call the sheriff?" I said.

Roy said he called the sheriff, and the sheriff was going to send Ira Wilson over first thing in the morning. *It's first thing in the morning now,* I thought. Roy looked at Sarah. "Honey, you feel like going over it again for George?"

She nodded slowly. "They came in through the kitchen while Mary was up front having some coffee with me," she said in a stunned voice. "They had shotguns, and handkerchiefs over their faces, and their hats pulled down low."

"One of 'em was that damn' Indian, if you ask me," Morgan said.

"Nobody asked you," I told him. "Keep your mouth shut, Morgan."

"Don't tell *me* to shut up, Mister Big!" he whinnied.

The mayor said quietly, "You'd best go, Morgan." The druggist showed his upper plate in a sneer, but he stalked to the door and out, and Sarah went on with her story.

"One of them was tall and slender and dark, with black hair," she said like a little girl reciting for grownups. "But it *wasn't* Charley. I *know* it wasn't Charley."

"Nobody thinks it was," I said, patting her hand like a father.

Sarah said the other man was shorter and a lot older—he had a wrinkled neck and old hands, she explained. They forced her and Mary, the night cook, into the kitchen. On the way she heard the cash drawer being punched open. The men made Sarah and the cook face the wall, hands behind their necks. She demonstrated, looking at me with an expression of solemn-little-girl indignation, and I wanted to take her in my arms and comfort her, or something.

"They went in the icebox," she said. "The big walk-in icebox, and—"

At this point Roy began pounding the counter with his fist, slowly and angrily. "They took a ninety-seven-pound hindquarter of prime beef," he said, his voice shaking with rage. "It cost—never mind. They took a dozen cured hams and six sides of bacon and a case of eggs."

HE PAUSED, and the men stirred restlessly. One of them moved to the door and went out, and I heard Morgan's hateful voice haranguing the mob. "Coverin' up for that worthless Indian!" Sarah bit her lip, and the mayor cleared his throat, but I didn't even look around.

"Some cases of canned fruit," Roy said. "An unopened box of bagged coffee." Thump! "A sack of navy beans." Thump! Every time he banged the counter Sarah flinched. Then Roy said wearily, "Oh, hell! Just say they cleaned me out. Just say they took almost everything."

"The bread," Sarah said helpfully. "The doughnuts and fried pies, and cigarettes and candy and potato chips. They dumped it in gunny sacks."

This can't be real, I thought. *I must be dreaming this screwy stuff.*

"And forty-some dollars in cash," Roy said with tired finality.

Sarah let out her breath shakily. "They had a car in the alley," she said, and suddenly she gave me a startled look. "Why, there must have been *three* of them! They whispered, but I heard one of them say, 'Tell him to back it up to the door.' There *had* to be three of them."

"You're doing fine, honey," I said.

"The tall one said if we moved they'd kill us," she said, and the memory of terror

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was in her eyes. "Then they drove away, and Mary just fainted, and I called Dad and tried to revive Mary, and . . ." Her voice trailed off, and I thought of something mighty shrewd to say.

"How'd the car sound?" I was on the job, see. I was working on the case. "Did it sound old or new?" I asked Sarah, and she shrugged, making a hopeless, despairing gesture.

Then her eyes came alive and she said eagerly, "Why it sounded *new*. You know, smooth and quiet."

"I don't suppose anybody saw the car?" I asked anybody who cared to answer. Nobody cared, and finally Sarah said, "It was the slow period, George. There wasn't anybody around. Nobody on the street, and the truckers hadn't started coming in yet. Business is dull until around two, after midnight."

So. One o'clock in the morning in a small town. Everything closed but the target, everybody home in bed—including the police force. *How did I get mixed up in all this?* I wondered dismally.

"Look," I told the coffee urn. "I'm not a trained cop. I don't know where to begin. Maybe the first thing to do is tell that mob outside to break it up and go home." Even as I said it, the mayor moved ponderously toward the door and opened it.

"You folks git on home, now," he said pleasantly. "You want to git pneumonia?" The excited voices laughed, and began to peel away from the noisy core and fade, and the mayor closed the door and came back to me. "Nobody expects you to perform any miracles, George," he said gently.

"If we knew what kind of car it was, we could alert the highway patrol," I told the coffee urn. "But we don't know." I lighted a cigarette and avoided Sarah's eyes. Me as a sleuth was bad casting. I wasn't even a convincing small-town marshal. Sarah squeezed my hand, and I told the urn we could go look in the alley, if we had a flashlight. The urn just sneered, but Roy said he had a flashlight.

"They must have overlooked it," he said bitterly.

Some cop, I thought. *No flashlight. No gun. No aptitude, either.*

We went out in the alley; if the muddy asphalt had any clues to give away, it kept mum about it. A chilly wind was blowing, and we stood there for a while. Then we went back inside without holding a caucus about it. There was a meat block inside the door, and Roy stopped and threw the light on it and started cursing. He had a magnificent command of invective, and when he finished, he said, "They even took my meat saw and cleaver."

Now there was a fine clue. Give that to a real cop—and bang, your case was all wrapped up. On the other hand, give it to Marshal George Alford, and nothing happened. Nothing at all.

"Could those jerks peddle the stuff they took?" Bob Woodruff asked.

"I suppose," Roy said. "To some shady dealer or café man."

"Looks like maybe they figure to carve that hindquarter theirselves," the mayor observed. "Trouble is," the mayor said, "it ain't likely anybody seen their car, and they could of left town by any one of five roads, countin' the river road that don't go nowheres much except Hungry Mountain."

Five minutes later we narrowed it down to exactly four roads, because a truck driver came in for chili and said he'd been broke down west of town since twelve thirty, and nobody passed him going west.

THE sound of his exhaust still lingered on the street when old Doc Golding came in for a snack. He calculated he'd been back in his office after delivering a baby fourteen miles north of Clover on number ten just about long enough to have been returning to town at that crucial moment when the holdup men were leaving town. So that narrowed it down to three avenues of escape, and that's where it stayed.

Sarah squeezed my hand and gave me a lingering, don't-forget-about-California look, and went home. I sat there drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes and pooled my brain with the mayor and Bob Woodruff, thinking very deductively about the case, and nothing came of it.

"Funny," Bob said. "They sure knew the right time to do the job."

"That's why Morgan is hollerin' Indian," the mayor said. "Looks like it'd take a local party to know about the café's ups and downs."

"Nuts to Morgan," Bob said. "And nuts to being editor of a weekly when a news story comes along. Four days cold before I can print it."

After a while he got up and went home, and some truckers came in and ate and left, and the mayor said thoughtfully, "Funny they'd use shotguns, instead of pistols. I wonder if them was *my* shotguns."

File that, Marshal, I thought. *Make a note of it.*

After a while the mayor went home, and some more truckers came in and ate and left, and I said to Roy, "All I can suggest at the moment is to wait for Ira Wilson and let *him* solve the crime, Roy."

"George," Roy said in a friendly though grieving tone of voice. "Not even J. Edward Hoover could unravel this one. Don't worry about it."

After a while I got up and went home.

The coffee I'd drunk kept me awake, and I rolled and tossed on my bed. And finally I solved the crime.

(To be concluded next week)

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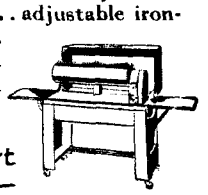

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The Last Souvenir

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

Yes, I did, as a matter of fact. I been carrying it around in my bag. Wait, it's right over there—"

"There's no hurry," Mrs. Summers said. "You were telling me the last time about—"

"About my Aunt Rosa," Vergie said, feeling the perspiration start out on her. Across the little table, she met the impassive, electric-blue gaze.

"You had just started to tell me how beautiful she was."

"Oh, well, yes, but as I say, I—I can hardly remember her now, 'cause I was only around ten at the time. It was when we were living over in Staten Island, and you know how kids are, growing up: they don't notice what's going on around them, and then all of a sudden they start to see—?"

Mrs. Summers closed her eyes in slow assent, and opened them. Working now by habit, Vergie's fingers were busy with lotion, orange sticks and scissors, as she talked. "Well, this was an aunt of mine by marriage. She married my Uncle Chris, and this summer I'm telling you about, they came over to stay with us, with their baby. See, here's what happened. They didn't get along together—ever, I guess. My uncle was about ten years older than she was, and an awful grouch to begin with, and this time she left him, just walked out with the baby, and said she'd never come back, but my mother— Well, she's awful strict about anything like that; she thought it was terrible on account of the baby and all, so she went to see them both, and talked them into giving it another chance."

"That was kind of her." Mrs. Summers' smile was enigmatic.

"Well, it *was* kind!" Vergie said loyally. "Because my uncle was drinking at the time, and got laid off, and it wasn't as if my family ever liked my Aunt Rosa. They said she was—oh, a factory girl, and a foreigner. Always dressing herself up, having her picture taken, and posing in front of the mirror. Of course *I* think the reason they didn't like her was because she was so beautiful, and none of us—I mean, we were always so homely."

A HUMBLE blush stole up over Vergie's throat and face. "Like nothing we had around us was ever very pretty. Everything was neat and clean, of course, clean as wax, but it was always scrubbed and scrubbed and bleached till they took all the color out of it. But I always thought my Aunt Rosa was wonderful. She was the one who made me realize there *was* such a thing as beauty in the world. I guess that's how I came to take this up—all these creams and scents and lotions—"

"I remember you telling me," Mrs. Summers murmured. "To get back though to your aunt. You said there was something about diamond rings?"

"Oh, yes. If you'll just let that hand soak for a minute— Let's see, I remember it was in July, and my father was away on a ship. Did I tell you he was a purser on the Norwegian Line? Well, anyway, this particular day, I was going to the beach with the family down the street, and I remember in the morning while I was waiting for my sandwiches to get made, my Aunt Rosa was racing around, dressing herself and the baby; she was going over to New Jersey to visit a girl friend."

As she spoke, Vergie saw a hurrying, excited figure partly dressed; what remained clearest was a pair of violet satin mules trimmed with marabou, and a gold chain around a slim bare ankle. "And by the time I got back that night, this is how I was with sunburn." Vergie hunched her head and bent her arms like ice tongs. "I went up the steps—we lived on the second floor of one of those two-family houses that have those long wooden stoops? And when I got upstairs I *thought* there was something funny. There was no one there but my grandmother. I remember standing in the kitchen, just in my panties, and my grandmother was putting cold tea on my sunburn." . . .

So vivid was the memory, it was as though Vergie were living it all over again.

"Turn around," Grandma said. "Let me get this on your shoulders."

Vergie's grandmother was pale-eyed, thin and undemonstrative. The cloth sopped in the saucepan of tea, and the chill wetness was patted on Vergie's burning shoulders.

"Where did Mama *go?*" Vergie asked for the second time.

"Let that dry on you, and it'll take out the fire."

"Didn't Aunt Rosa and the baby get back yet?"

"No, and if you know what's good for you, you'll keep away from her. Now go on."

Vergie stepped into her play-dress, and went over to the screened window, looking out at the hot summer dusk. She felt close to the sky and the stars coming out, for the ground at the rear of these houses dropped sharply away, and the entire row was supported by high stilts. She thought of Aunt Rosa and longed for a return of those first rainy afternoons before the front parlor had been declared forbidden territory—afternoons while the baby played there in her pen, and Aunt Rosa and she talked and talked as if they were the same age, and leafed through old movie magazines.

"No, Vergie," Aunt Rosa had said, "it's bone structure; that's what makes someone beautiful, not a lot of curls and a teeny little mouth. See, all around her forehead and eyes, and this part here where her cheek sinks in. It's molded, like sculpture, see? That's what you want to always look for."

It was all suddenly clear, never to be forgotten, and Aunt Rosa was saying: "Here's this old silver evening dress; of course it's all tarnished and ratty-looking now, but I used to wear it with a big bunch of red poppies on my shoulder, red satin shoes with rhinestone heels, and my black shawl—"

Following these afternoons of talking, of watching Aunt Rosa make up her face and arrange her hair in different styles, Vergie came out to dinner dazed and exhausted, unable to bridge the gap between the transformed front parlor, and the rigidity, the spare, cold light of the dining room.

"Oh, here. Here's the chart," Aunt Rosa had said on the last of their afternoons. "Now, it says for someone with your coloring—" She took another look at the adoring Vergie. "Well, it says you can wear browns, navy, dark greens. But you know what I'd do if I was you, Vergie. And I mean it. The minute I grew up, I'd change the color of my hair, bleach it or do something, 'cause this way you have no *contrast* with your eyes and skin." That, overheard, had brought Mama rushing in to rescue Vergie.

"And don't ever let me catch you in there with her again, d'you hear me?" Mama had whispered, still furious, in the kitchen. "You stay away from her!" But it wasn't only for that reason, Vergie knew. There was something else, grown-up, half overheard, only half understood. At the time Aunt Rosa had left Uncle Chris, she had been "seeing some man on the side . . ."

Standing at the kitchen window, forming no judgments, Vergie recalled the other things they had said about Aunt Rosa. "She was never any good from the day he married her. Bad as he is, I blame her for every . . . And there was someone else when they lived in that other house. She was rushing out to meet him all the time. She's good to the baby—that's all you can say for her." . . .

COLLIER'S

"I didn't get a scratch when the car went into the ditch—I got this coming home on the bus"

GEORGE HAMILTON GREEN

"Give me your bathing suit, and I'll rinse it out," Grandma started to say, when below, the front door slammed. Footsteps ascended cautiously; then they finished up with a confident rush, and Aunt Rosa came running into the kitchen, flushed, brilliant-eyed, smiling, in her watermelon silk suit, beige cloche and beige satin shoes. At the sight of so much vividness, Vergie felt herself go weak with love.

"Hello, Mom!" Aunt Rosa cried in her vital, husky voice. "Hello, Vergie! Wow, look at you! What's the matter, sunburn?"

Grandma stared at her black-haired daughter-in-law. "Where were you till this—? Where's the *baby?*"

Aunt Rosa was still breathing hard, smiling. "I left her in New Jersey. They were all so crazy about her, and it was so much cooler there. Nice and shady. I told them just for a few days. You ought to see how cute she was!"

"But you weren't there!" Grandma cried. "You never went. Your friend—Marie, whatever her name is—she called up about an hour ago to see how you were. She told Chris she hadn't heard from you in months."

There was the picture of Aunt Rosa's shocked face. "Oh, my God! Wh-where is Chris? Inside?"

"He's gone all over creation looking for you. He was wild. He said you went off to meet some man."

"No, I never did!" Aunt Rosa cried too quickly.

"And now you have Anna out looking for Chris. From the day you came—"

Aunt Rosa made a swift, distracted sign. Footsteps were coming up the linoleum-covered stairs. She snatched off her hat, tossed it behind her on the shelf, and fluffed out the edges of her bobbed hair. Coils of fright tightened inside Vergie.

UNCLE CHRIS, heavy, reddish, reddish-haired and sweating, careened against the doorway on the way in. He threw off Mama's grasp on his arm. "When'd *you* get back?"

"Just the minute you left." Aunt Rosa moistened her lips and tried to smile. "I must have come along just as you—"

"She never brought the baby home at all!" Grandma cried. "Left her somewhere in New Jersey. What do you think of that?"

For Vergie it was a night of revelation. So that was what Grandma was like! And this was Uncle Chris when he had been drinking: this scowling, unsteady man, his eyes paining him in the overhead light that brought out all the frowning knots in his face. At his side stood Mama in profile, tense, sallow, her tan hair dragged back, unlovely in her housedress of brown-and-white stripes, white socks and black shoes. As if a spirit went out of her, Vergie felt all her allegiance leave the family, and range itself on the side of her Aunt Rosa.

"Where were you?" he asked in a lower tone, going closer to her.

"Like I said—" Aunt Rosa retreated.

"You're a liar!"

"No, now wait, Chris, please. All right, I didn't go to Marie's. I went to a different girl friend's." Her back was against the closet door. "To Louise's. In Plainfield. She used to work with me in—"

"You're lying to me!" he shouted. "You liar!" He brought up his large hand, and smashed her full across the face. Her head banged against the closet door. She let out a cry. Another blow came, and her head swiveled and banged to the opposite side.

"Chris!" Mama pleaded. "Please! Not in front of—"

"Quick! Quick!" Grandma was stirred to sudden activity. "Anna, quick, get her inside! Chris, Chris, you *stop* this!"

Vergie was stunned to discover it was she they were rushing inside, leaving Aunt Rosa behind. "Help her!" Vergie cried, struggling to break away. But they pushed her before them into the dining room, and shielded her from the sight. There came the same loud whizzing crack as he struck Aunt Rosa again, and to drown out the sound, Vergie rammed hard against her mother, and squeezed her eyes shut tight.

"There, Vergie, don't," her mother was saying presently. "He's gone." Vergie heard him starting down the stairs, almost falling the whole length. In the kitchen Aunt Rosa moved, took her hands down from her face; her big pearl beads began bouncing and rattling all over the floor. She ran out to the hall, into the bathroom, and slammed the door.

After a long silence, Grandma inquired of Mama: "Did he find out where she was?"

"No. What'd she do? Leave the baby someplace?"

"Why'd he hit her?" Vergie cried in a trembling voice. "He didn't have to hit her!"

"Now never mind, Vergie. Keep out of what doesn't concern you."

"I hate him!" she said fiercely, and at the

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thought of Uncle Chris, her stomach turned and revolted. Mama and Grandma retired to the kitchen to whisper. Vergie sat down near the dining-room window, feeling the prickly fabric of the seat cover against her sunburned legs. Looking down, she noticed her bare feet had started to puff; her whole body was dry and burning.

Aunt Rosa, stepping quickly into the dining room, came over and perched on the arm of Vergie's chair. In the one glimpse that Vergie caught, her face looked swollen and lopsided under a fresh application of powder.

"Well, with all the excitement around here, I didn't get a chance to ask you how your day was, did I?" Aunt Rosa said. "Gee, that's a terrible burn. D'you go in the water a lot?"

Suddenly heartsore, Vergie turned her face toward the dark window, but she was aware of the warm, bright silk of Aunt Rosa's skirt, and she was enveloped in the scent of her face powder and strong, beautiful perfume.

Vergie—" Aunt Rosa's voice became confidential. "Look, I want to tell you something. He didn't hurt me. He didn't hurt me at all. We were only fooling. You don't want to pay any attention."

Through sudden tears, Vergie saw the moon with a long, dim, splintering cross before it. "You know what, Vergie? Someday—someday when I'm rich, I'm going to come back and call for you—in a great big car. And we'll stop off and buy you a beautiful party dress, and go for a wonderful ride, you and me and the baby. We'll stop off and have dinner in a wonderful big restaurant. Won't that be nice?"

"No." Vergie gave way, and burst into tears.

"Ah gee, it's awful for a kid to— I know what! Look, whyn't you let me put some cold cream on that sunburn? Come on in my room."

But listening, Mama said sharply from the kitchen, "Vergie, come out here. Your supper's ready."

AFTER eating, Vergie crossed the dining room on her bare feet, went through the darkened bedroom beyond, and came into the front parlor so noiselessly that she startled Aunt Rosa who was sitting on the floor, ripping snapshots out of her albums. Aunt Rosa had three albums; the pictures were scattered all about her. The lamp shade was tilted, and for the first time Vergie clearly saw a black eye.

A big brass bed had been set up in the room along with the baby's crib; and over a screen, Aunt Rosa had thrown her black Spanish shawl with all the bright flowers on it.

"What a scare you gave me!" Aunt Rosa cried. "I—I'm—I was just going to make a new album. Don't tell any of the others; they think I'm crazy anyway. Want to see a picture of how I looked before I was married? This is the cup I won in a Charleston contest, and here's the boy friend I won it with."

Vergie looked down at the two young people holding a silver loving cup between them. Aunt Rosa was smiling her excited, vital smile; the young man's sleek hair was parted sharply in the center. Each wore a placard with a number on it, and behind them rose up the skeleton of a grandstand with red-white-and-blue bunting.

"Aunt Rosa," Vergie said shyly, giving the picture back, "could I—would you put some of your cold cream on me? Mama said I could have some—just a little—for my sunburn."

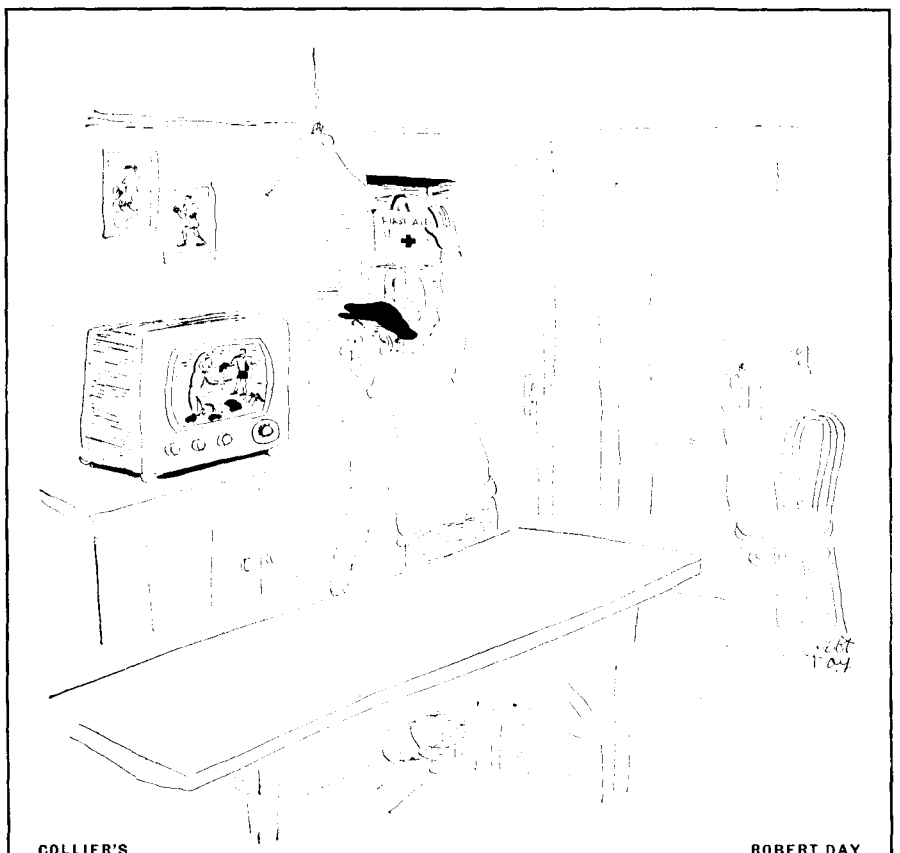
The scent of it, like richest, smoothest flowers, clung to her through the night. It was there every time she woke up, hot and feverish in the double bed she shared with her grandmother. The inner, windowless room was stifling. Both doors were partly open to cause a draft, and through the distant pale oblong of the dining-room window, Vergie saw heat lightning trembling in the sky. Then a flashlight switched on for a second in the front parlor.

Reassured that it wasn't a burglar, but only Aunt Rosa getting up to look at the baby, she started to close her eyes; then she recalled that the baby was not there, and her senses sprang alert. She heard Uncle Chris's loud snoring, and the even, much lighter sound of Grandma's breathing beside her. A wire coat hanger twanged; a silk dress fell.

Someone—Aunt Rosa—was moving about swiftly and quietly. As Vergie listened, the latches of a suitcase snapped into place. Packing things. Running away from Uncle Chris!

VERGIE'S heart shot up into her throat. Aunt Rosa was coming into the room with her, tiptoeing past the foot of the bed, bumping the traveling bag. Rigid with fright, Vergie held her breath. A moment. Two moments. Then a sound came faintly from the blackness over at Grandma's bureau, and the handkerchief drawer slid open.

Leaving a note for Grandma? For me? An eclipse blotted out the dim oblong of



COLLIER'S ROBERT DAY

the doorway. Aunt Rosa crept safely into the dining room, and set the traveling bags down on their tiny metal knobs. Why didn't she hurry down the stairs? To Vergie's astonishment, the china-closet door swung open with a loud squeak.

In the dark, Vergie seemed to see lights whirling at her and bursting. Appalled, terrified, she knew exactly what Aunt Rosa was doing at the china closet. There came an even more frightful shock. Mama had got up out of bed, and Vergie heard the pad, pad, pad of her slippered feet coming down the hall.

"Who's that out there?" she whispered. "Who's that got up? Rosa?"

Vergie, despite the pain of her sunburn, had sprung to a sitting position in the bed. Torn in her loyalties, in the midst of the explosions of fright and revelation, she heard her own voice quaver: "It was—it was *me*, Mama."

"What are you doing up at this hour?" Mama asked.

The words leaped up in letters of flame: I Must Not Tell A Lie. Vergie felt her head splitting open. "I went out to—to get a drink of water."

"Waking everyone out of a sound sleep!" Mama said angrily.

The footsteps retreated. Then for the pounding of the blood in her ears, the knowledge of her full guilt and complicity, Vergie could hear nothing for several minutes. A long while after, Aunt Rosa crept down the stairs with her traveling bags, and the front door closed softly behind her. . . .

In the morning, when Mama went in to waken Uncle Chris, it was found that Aunt Rosa had gone. "Not a stitch left!" Mama cried, coming out to report. "Didn't leave a thing of the child's."

"What? What's Chris say? What's he doing?"

"You know how he is in the morning—you can't get a thing out of him."

They could hear him in the bathroom, rushing water into the basin, loudly clearing his throat. Without him, they sat down to breakfast at the kitchen window. Vergie's eyes, puffed with sleeplessness, bored through the wall, seeing the dining room's glass-and-oak china closet, and its top shelf where the good cups and saucers were kept.

The awful discovery was not made till eleven o'clock, long after Uncle Chris had gone. Vergie was idling in the front parlor, missing the Spanish shawl, while Grandma mopped the floor boards with a strong-smelling disinfectant. A series of stricken cries from Mama brought them rushing into the dining room. The china closet door stood open.

"My rings! My engagement ring! My pinkie ring! I had them last night! And fourteen dollars in the teapot—Gone! My diamond rings are gone!" Breathless with dismay, Mama and Grandma stared at each other, then without a word, Grandma turned and hurried into the bedroom.

"My gold pin! My watch!" White-faced, astounded, she appeared in the doorway. "She's stolen them. She's cleaned us out of everything."

IN THE little white-curtained booth, Vergie caught her breath, remembering. "And didn't they ever try to find out where she went?" Mrs. Summers asked.

"Sure they did. My uncle got detectives in, and they searched for months. It was in all the papers. They got leads from the Coast, from all over, but it was just like they said: as if the earth opened up and swallowed them. Now you wouldn't think that could happen, would you?"

Vergie was applying the colorless polish to Mrs. Summers' nails. "What made it so hard for the detectives was that my uncle gave a description of what they looked like and all, but we didn't know what she was wearing when she went, and she didn't leave a single picture of herself for them to go by. She ripped them all out, and took them with her. My mother felt awful, not just because of the rings, though that was bad enough; but it was more because she tried so hard to bring them together, and someone would turn around and do a trick like that on her."

"But your aunt must have *hated* doing that. And been so ashamed—" Mrs. Summers broke off. "Your uncle— How did he—?"

"Oh, he was boiling. He said if he ever got his hands on her, he'd murder her. He was always shouting at the detectives because they couldn't find her, put her in jail, and take the baby away from her."

"But he never found a trace of her." Mrs. Summers smiled, satisfied.

"No, never."

"Did— Is— Did he die?"

And wasn't that what she had come back for—to find that out?

"No, no such luck," Vergie said, and momentarily her shoulders sagged. "He still makes his home with us. Mama and I."

"And didn't he ever outgrow—his feelings of resentment?"

"Him? You don't know him! I—I mean no, he never did. Whenever he gets a couple of drinks aboard, he starts off on the same old thing—how she ruined his life. I'd hate to think what would happen if he ever got wind of her again—"

TOO late Vergie saw her mistake. She could have bitten off her tongue. Some thing flickered behind Mrs. Summers' eyes.

"This—this snapshot you have. You said it was a picture of your aunt with her baby. How did you—?"

"Oh! Well, you see, one day—this was about a week before she ran away—I found this picture on the floor of her closet. I—I had sneaked in to look at her dresses, and I picked it up and kept it. I put it in a candy box I had—with beads you know, and junk. Not junk to *me*. And all the time they were all hunting for a picture of her to give the detectives, I never let on I had it."

"And you have it with you?"

"Yes, I— If you'll just let that dry, I'll—" Vergie got up from the table, went over and opened the gold snaps of her white kid bag, remembering what Mrs. Summers had said of the time she had fled her house on the Riviera at the start of the war. "I walked out with just the clothes on my back," she had said. "Everything was lost or destroyed. Things I had held onto for years . . ."

So that if the albums of snapshots were gone, this would be the last souvenir. Vergie took the picture out, and in the mirror saw the slow-waving hand, and the waiting, masklike face of Mrs. Summers.

Wasn't that the face of Aunt Rosa? Aunt Rosa afraid to let on who she is, afraid I'll say something at home and Uncle Chris will get on her trail, have her arrested for bigamy and stealing? Or am I losing my mind?—Vergie wondered.

Yet there were the remembered words: *Vergie. I knew a Vergie once—a long time ago. The Vergie I knew was just a little girl.*

And after that, hadn't Mrs. Summers asked especially for me? Didn't she deliberately get me to talk about myself and the family? If I could only come outright and ask her. But with a customer you didn't dare. After saying how she ran around with other men, and stole from my own mother, you couldn't say: Aren't you my Aunt Rosa? Supposing I'm wrong? She could cause a terrible scene with Miss Estelle.

"Well, here it is," she said with a forced laugh, and for a moment she stood at the woman's shoulder, looking down at the faded snapshot under the circle of light.

It showed from a distance a slim, dark-haired girl smiling into the sunlight, holding a child in her arms; the tiny figure stood in coarse grass on a slope, her short dress belted around the hips, and behind her were the stilts that supported the house in Staten Island.

"See, it isn't so good of her—it's better

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of the baby." The cracked picture was trembling in Mrs. Summers' hand.

"So beautiful," Mrs. Summers murmured, bending over it. Was she speaking of herself? Or of the baby?

"The funny thing is," Vergie said, seating herself and taking a sudden vast chance, "about all I can remember of my Aunt Rosa is the color of her eyes. They were sort of gray. But bright." Her heart was thudding. "I mean like—well, like yours."

Mrs. Summers did not lift her head. It was almost as though she had not heard.

With an unsteady voice Vergie continued: "I'd give anything to know what happened, whether she had a sad life, or a happy one."

When Mrs. Summers looked up, she too seemed to wonder, to be unable to give the answer. "Or about the baby," Vergie said. "I wonder if she grew up to be beautiful like her mother. She'd be my cousin, and if I could, I'd like to meet her because maybe we could get to be friends."

And the dream recurred—of being spirited away in a long, flashing car, away from the cramped apartment in Jamaica with Mama and Uncle Chris, of being swept up into an appreciative, brilliant world. Her throat aching with tears, she pleaded across the table with Mrs. Summers.

"Mrs. Summers, I loved my Aunt Rosa better than anyone else, really I did. She meant so much to me. Ever since I knew her, I—I've kept looking for beautiful things everywhere—"

"Yes. Yes, of course. She's left you that. She'd be glad to know that, awfully glad." Across the lamplight, the electric-blue eyes were enormous, magnetizing. Oh, we're talking to each other at last, Vergie thought. "And you can be sure that she's never forgotten you, Vergie—that terrible night you helped her escape. But don't you see, there'd be no way for her to get in touch with you without giving herself away?"

"But I'd never tell. And I always remember her saying someday she'd come back and call for me in her car." It was the wrong thing to say. Mrs. Summers, though sympathetic, seemed to withdraw, to shake her head, to smile in refusal. . . .

High heels came swiftly along the hall; the white curtain of the booth swung back.

"Mrs. Summers, excuse me!" cried Miss Estelle, thin, Spanish-looking, her dark eyes snapping about the booth. "I don't want to rush you or anything like that, but one of our clients had an appointment for three, and I wondered if you—"

"What? Is it past *three?* My heavens, I must fly. Vergie, may I have my hat there, please? Vergie's been telling me the most interesting story, and I had no idea how time—I have a thousand things to do. Did I tell you I'm getting ready to go away?"

"For a little trip? A vacation?" Miss Estelle kept the booth open.

"Oh, thank you, Vergie. Yes, I'm going away." Facing her reflection, she put on the wide brown straw hat, then moved about gathering up her gloves, bag, a small package she had been carrying. "It's been so nice coming here. The girls have all been lovely."

"W-won't we *see* you again?" Vergie cried, astounded. What have I done? Frightened her off? That mention of Uncle Chris. She'll go rushing home and pack—

"No-o, I don't believe so, so I'll say good-by, and thank you so much, Vergie." A stranger once more, gracious, smiling, vague, she bestowed on Vergie the same fifty-cent tip she had always given her.

ACCEPTING it, Vergie struggled to bring out a final, decisive question but in the presence of Miss Estelle, the words rammed together, locked in her throat; and before she could realize what was happening, without a backward glance, talking in little sighs and exclamations with Miss Estelle, Mrs. Summers went out of the booth, her voice fading among the other voices, among the whir of driers all along the row.

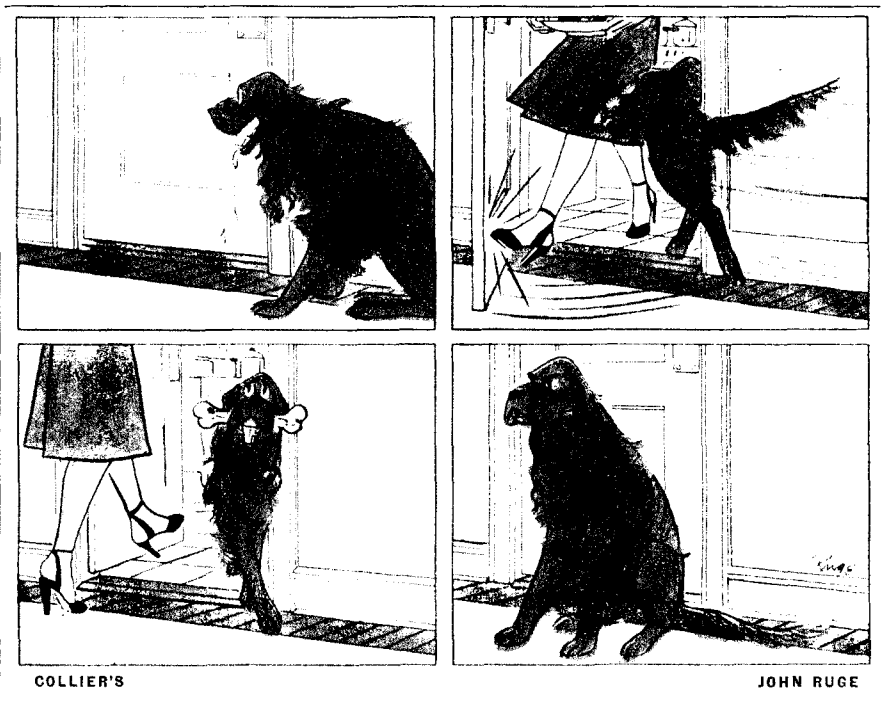
Vergie was left gaping at the empty doorway. Could I have only imagined— Was the whole thing just a *story* to Mrs. Summers? It must have been. Because when I showed her the snapshot, she didn't even make the slightest fuss. So beautiful. That's all she said. Slowly, in a daze, Vergie began throwing away the little used wads of cotton, pausing to frown, to think back.

"Vergie!" Miss Estelle rushed in. "Quick—get over to Number Six, and give Mrs. Ostermayer an oil manicure. Keep your big trap shut, and be back here in time for Mrs. Leddy. Ostermayer's under the drier already." She turned with a flashing smile, and beckoned from the doorway. "Right in here, Mrs. Leddy. No, the booth's open now. I'm *sorry* you had to wait. Peggy will be here in a second."

Vergie, moving in shock, emptied the frilled paper cups of water. I let her walk out like that, she thought. Oh, why didn't I run after her and say something, ask her point-blank? Now there'll never be any way of knowing . . .

While the new customer waited, and against Miss Estelle's rising impatience, Vergie looked all over, high and low, on the floor, under the chairs, on the glass shelf, through her handbag, in the hamper—everywhere. But the snapshot of her Aunt Rosa was gone. THE END

CLANCY



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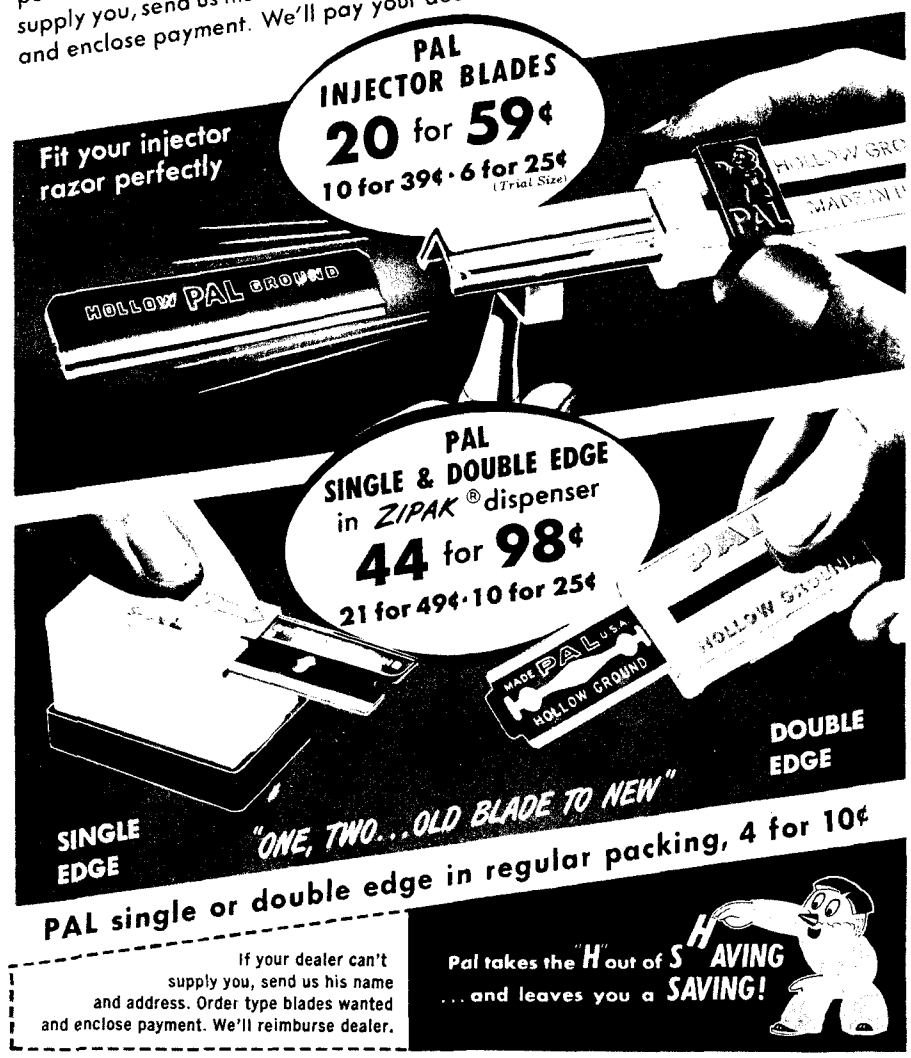
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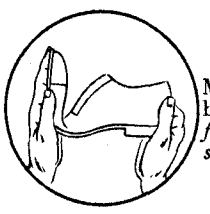

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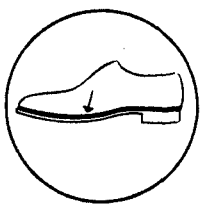

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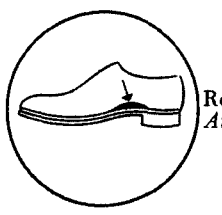

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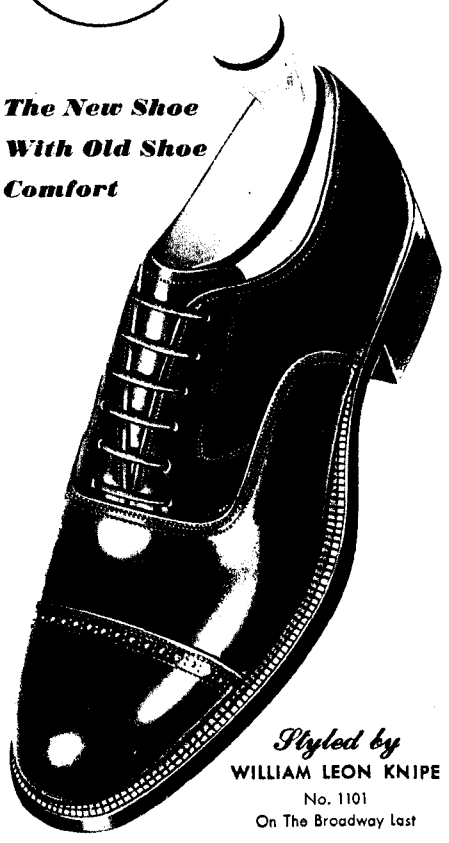

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Cheaper Food— Promise or Political Lure?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

American works 28 minutes, a Frenchman, 80 minutes, an Englishman, 44 minutes, and a Swiss, 116 minutes. For just four minutes of working time an American can buy a pound of flour. The Chilean must work 13 minutes, the Frenchman, 20, and the Russian, 52.

Mr. Brannan has described his plan as one to give farmers "the opportunity to earn a reasonable return for abundant production" and at the same time give "taxpayers their money's worth."

A more accurate description of this Utopian panacea would, I think, be "the promise of a government-guaranteed profit for the farmer, cheap food for the consumer, and it won't cost anybody much."

Suspicion Is Justifiable

The Brannan Plan has no antecedents in the platforms of either major political party. It was contrived without consultation with either Congressional or farm organization leaders. One might appropriately ask: Is it really a farm program, or is it the most ingenious, insidious and disarming political lure of our generation?

When the Secretary and those paid Department of Agriculture employees who are serving as salesmen for the Brannan Plan talk to farmers, they talk about prices. Price is the core of the plan. Stripped of fancy language, the Brannan proposal is that government farm price supports be high enough not only to maintain, but actually increase, the present surplus-yielding volume of production. Consumers allegedly would get food for the low price it might bring in a surplus-glutted market. Farmers supposedly would get, in the form of checks from Washington, the difference between these depressed market prices and the so-called government-guaranteed prices.

When Mr. Brannan submitted his plan to the House Agriculture Committee on April 7, 1949, he said it was "not likely to startle anyone" because "I have no revolutionary ideas to present to you." In the sense that his scheme embraces elements that have been tried in a limited way, it is true that it is not new or startling. But in its total philosophy, the Brannan Plan is a revolutionary departure from the basic concepts which up to now have been the foundation structure of the American economy.

Farmers view price supports as the counterpart of minimum wages for labor. They want to fit a price-support program into our peculiarly successful regulated free enterprise system. They believe farm programs should be directed toward maintaining a fair-exchange relationship between the prices of things farmers sell and the cost of things farmers buy.

The American Farm Bureau Federation does not consider it the government's responsibility to guarantee profitable prices to any group. Instead, we view farm price supports as an appropriate and necessary protection against unreasonable price declines, which, if allowed to continue unchecked, would adversely affect the general welfare.

The Brannan Plan is something altogether different. Under it the farmer's only hope for a "fair" income would depend on government handouts via annual appropriations by Congress. Certainly it would be dangerously shortsighted to stake the future of agriculture on the mere hope that the funds would be voted each year.

Farmers are a minority group, about 19 per cent of our population. Give the nation a little adversity and the farmer's chance of getting the sort of appropriations that would be required under the Brannan Plan would be about as good as the well-known snowball in—you know where.

If the plan is put in operation on the basis on which it has been presented to farmers, very large Congressional appropriations would be needed. Mr. Brannan to date has failed to comply with repeated Congressional requests for an estimate of the annual appropriations that would be needed under his proposal. But recent estimates by Congressional leaders and farm economists of the annual cost to taxpayers of the Brannan Plan range from $6,000,000,000 to $19,000,000,000.

What would have happened to the 1949 potato crop if the Secretary's proposal had been in effect? Twenty-one per cent more potatoes would have gone to market. Leading farm economists agree that these added potatoes would have driven the farm price down 35 to 50 per cent. The average market price of potatoes in 1949 was $1.40 a bushel. A 35 per cent drop would have pushed the average farm price down to 90 cents a bushel. But the Brannan Plan support standard would have set the government guarantee to farmers at $1.59 a bushel —a cost of 69 cents a bushel to be paid farmers out of the federal Treasury.

This would have meant a total cost to taxpayers of about $277,000,000—three times the cost of the actual 1949 potato support program. While the present program needs correcting, there ought to be a better way to do it than to ask the taxpayer to jump out of the frying pan into the fire.

"Production payments," as proposed in the Brannan Plan, cannot be accurately appraised without taking into account the level of prices allegedly guaranteed. Under the plan, this level is so high that it would be bound to cause a vast expansion in agricultural production, and unmanageable surpluses would result. A year or two of this might well drive farm prices so low as to make all the farmer's net income, and more, dependent upon his ability to get a government check.

Take the case of a hog farmer. I am one. I know about hogs; I like them and they seem to like me. They paid for my family farm in Iowa. Under the Brannan Plan, hog producers would be guaranteed prices high enough to cause them to step up production 20 to 25 per cent.

The government presumably would make up the difference between the market price and the price it promises farmers.

Enslaved by the Subsidy

This government check would represent probably all the hog farmer's net income and possibly part of his costs. What would this mean to him? What would happen if the check didn't come through? It wouldn't involve just his ability to build a new barn or buy a new car. It would involve the difference between his staying in business and going broke; it would determine his ability to feed and clothe his family.

If I were a government official looking for a way to bring the American farmer under my thumb, I'd use that method. When the time came, the farmer would either do as he was told, or would fold up for lack of a subsidy check.

The Brannan Plan's income standard, as presented to Congress, proposes to set a price for hogs at about $19 per hundred pounds and a price of $1.46 for a bushel of corn. This is a corn-hog ratio of 13 to 1—13 bushels of corn would be worth 100 pounds of pork. In theory this is decidedly favorable to the hog raiser, who certainly would step up production, knowing he could raise or buy corn for $1.46 and get a return of $19 for his hogs.

But do you think the government could let a man raise all the hogs he wanted to raise at that kind of price? Of course not. Production would have to be controlled.

And these production curbs would have to be applied to other producers—poultrymen, dairymen, cattlemen and so forth.

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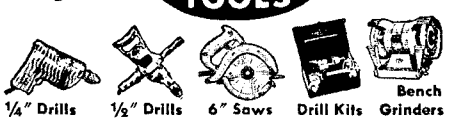

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The plan is pictured as being all things to all men. About his "income support standard," which would replace the present parity formula and provide the basis for guaranteed prices to farmers, Mr. Brannan says:

"This income support standard simply represents a realistic minimum below which it is not in the interest of farmers or consumers to allow farm prices to fall, and above which I would hope to find most farm prices most of the time." He adds that his proposed production payments "would allow farm income to remain at a high enough level to sustain abundant production while retail prices sought their supply-and-demand level in the market place. This level is bound to be reasonable for consumers because of the large supplies brought out."

But on the other hand the Secretary says:

"It is obvious, of course, that the use of production payments must be qualified in such a manner as to avoid extremely depressed prices in the market place, or a wasteful use of soil resources."

In other words, one minute Mr. Brannan expects farm prices to be above the proposed support level. The next, he holds out to consumers the glittering prospect of cheap food—so cheap we would have to establish safeguards against "extremely depressed prices."

Which is it? It can't be both.

Some cynics say the farmer is interested only in price. When he sees the Brannan Plan in operation, they say, he will think everything is just fine—that all he'll have to do is sell his products, keep his sales slips, turn them over to the government and get the rest of his money through a subsidy check.

We feel sure that this would neither add up to a satisfactory income for the individual farm family, nor make for a satisfied farmer.

Under the Brannan Plan continuous and rigid controls over production would be inevitable. The result would be a ceiling on opportunity in agriculture. More and more, the right to produce—inefficient and costly as it might be—would be parceled out on a per capita basis. This would discourage the people who try to discover new and shorter methods of producing abundantly. The farmers would be lined up, and if one stuck his head above the others, he would be pushed down.

That is a policy of defeatism—a policy of supervised poverty for farmers. You can stabilize things so that it takes a long time to starve, but that doesn't create the dynamic agriculture essential to an expanding national economy.

During the war I visited a farmer in Scotland who had about 800 acres. He was a good farmer, a very good one. He asked how big my farm was and how many hogs I had. I told him 440 acres and five or six hundred head. He asked how many men I hired, and I said two. He had 82 men on his place and he could not believe that two men could take care of that many hogs.

My reply was, "We don't let two men waste time taking care of those hogs. It takes one of them a couple of hours a day."

High income for farmers depends upon the same kind of thing that it takes to get high income for other people—high production per man. You are not going to have a happy and prosperous farm people, individual farmers doing better all the time, unless you have increasing production per man.

This does not mean producing surpluses regardless of demand. It does mean making certain that we increase, rather than decrease, efficiency on American farms. If there are too many people in agriculture for all to earn a good living, then the national interest will be served best by providing other job opportunities for those farmers who cannot farm efficiently.

Go into any rural community, and if you find production per man very low, you will find the standard of living also low.

A Bonus for Inefficiency

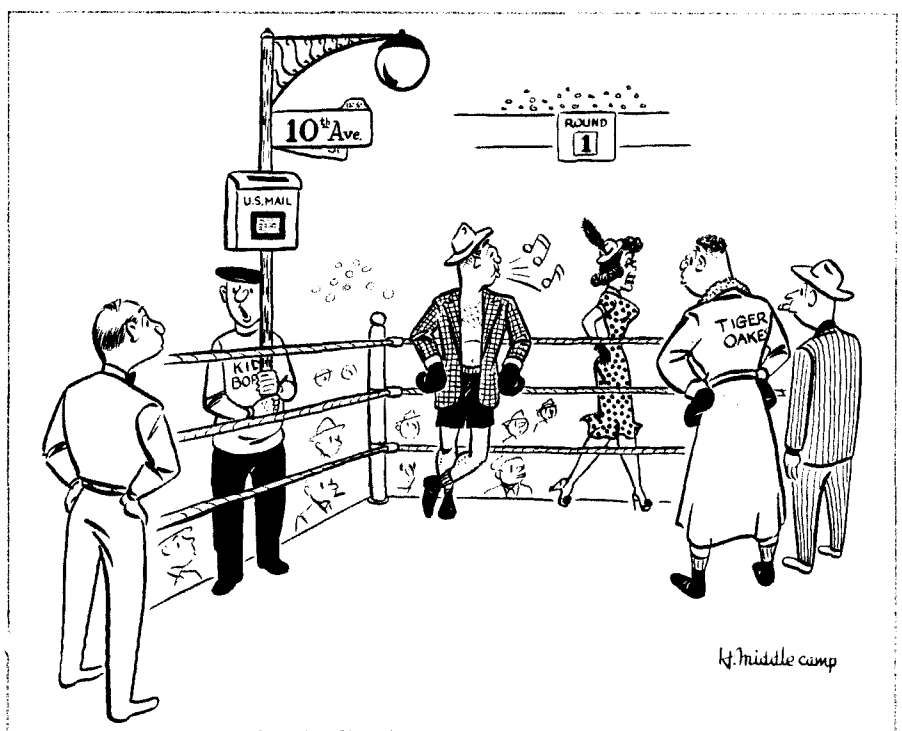
The high level of prices promised in the Brannan Plan would tend to "freeze" in agriculture the inefficient producers. About half the people who live on farms produce 90 per cent of the food and fiber that get into the channels of trade. Would a scheme like Mr. Brannan's be of much help to the other half, who produce only 10 per cent of the commodities going into trade?

Suppose you lived in an area where the gross annual income averaged $800 per family. Say you got a guaranteed 10 or 15 per cent increase in price for your products. What have you got? Another $80 or $100. What can you do with that? It wouldn't go far toward buying a new wardrobe, a new car, or sending the children to college.

The answer to this low-income problem is not price—whether figured by the present farm parity formula or by Mr. Brannan's Plan. The answer lies in increased opportunity to earn a higher total income. Much of this opportunity probably will have to be found outside of agriculture.

How would the consumer fare under the Brannan Plan?

First, let's put the food picture in the proper perspective. Many customers don't know that food is relatively cheap in America. This does not mean that there isn't still



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room for improvement in production and distribution in America, but it does mean that—before we discard it—we ought to take a second look at the system which currently ranks at the top of the list of all nations in results.

In 1935-'39, American consumers spent 23 per cent of their disposable income for food; they could buy the same diet at today's prices for 19 per cent of their income. Today they are spending 27 per cent—but they are eating better.

Retail Food Costs Reduced

Food prices have come down substantially. At prices prevailing in July, 1948, the average annual retail cost of the market basket of food for a family of three average consumers was $712. In October, 1949, the same quantity of food could be bought for $637—a drop of $75.

It is interesting to observe that of this $75 drop the farmer absorbed $69, while charges made for services performed after the food left the farms declined only $6. Farmers receive an average of less than 50 cents of the consumer's dollar. The rest goes to pay for the freight, labor, wholesaling, processing, packaging, taxes, etc., between the farm and the ultimate consumer.

There is nothing in the Brannan Plan that would reduce these after-the-farm costs which take the other half of the present-day food dollar—and it is well to remember that.

Under the plan someone would have to put up the dollars to pay the government's guarantee on my hogs, the Wisconsin farmer's milk, the New York farmer's eggs, the Californian's fruits and vegetables, the Texan's beef.

Suppose you pay the grocery store 40 cents a dozen for eggs and 15 cents a quart for milk, while the government is paying the farmer prices which ordinarily would cause consumers to pay 60 cents for the same eggs and 20 cents for the milk.

Is your transaction finished? Let's not kid ourselves! Come March 15th and you'll have to make another ante on your grocery bill by way of your income tax—just as the farmer will have to turn back part of his check. Those government payments would have to come from somewhere, and there is but one source—the taxpayers—which means all of us.

Never forget that you can't send a dollar to Washington and get it all back. That is a costly journey. Folks would be much better off to pay for their food at the grocery store.

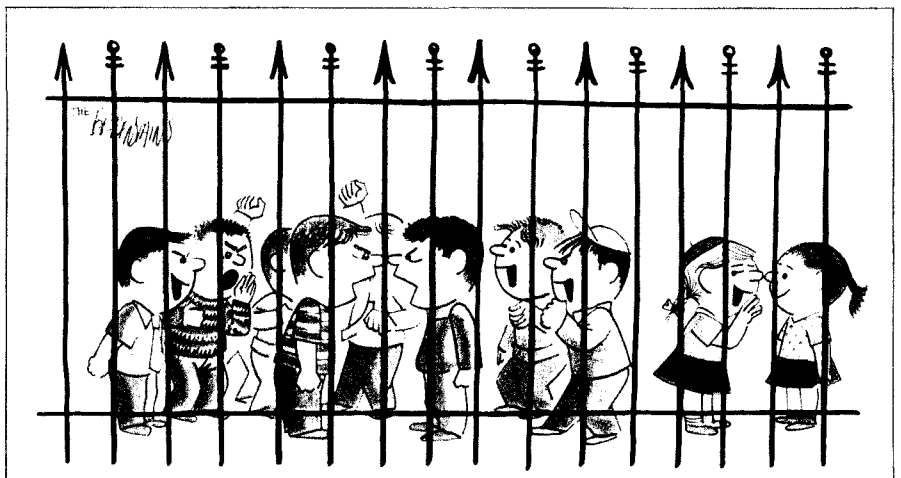
The real cost of food—what the consumer pays both directly and in taxes—would rise immediately if the Brannan Plan were in effect. Under Mr. Brannan's formula, for example, the income support standard price for hogs—$19 a hundred pounds—was more than $3 per hundred pounds above the actual average price of hogs last October, November, December and January.

This means that taxpayers would have had to put out more than $3 a hundred pounds on hogs compared to what they actually did pay in these four months.

If the Brannan Plan had been in effect in 1949, and hogs had sold at the average support price in effect in the fall of 1949 and winter of 1950, the production payments needed to bring farm prices on the hogs actually marketed to the Brannan support level would have cost taxpayers about $465,000,000. Under the same conditions the present support program wouldn't cost taxpayers a thin dime.

Furthermore, if the incentive prices promised by the plan increased production and marketing—and they would—the taxpayers would have to ante up for all the further declines in market prices—plus, of course, the cost of administration and the difficulty of getting along with the expanded bureaucracy involved.

Although there has been a support price on hogs, the government hasn't had to make more than a token purchase, because market prices have been generally above support levels. Incidentally, there hasn't been, and there isn't today, any support price on beef, veal and lamb. The Brannan proposal would provide supports and authorize controls for all of these.



COLLIER'S

"I'll get it started with a good shove while you run tell Miss McKenna"

STANLEY & JANICE BERENSTAIN

The tentacles of a Brannan Plan would spread. If you promise a high and profitable price to farmers, and cheap food to consumers, a lot of people other than farmers are likely to become involved.

What if the plan had been in effect during the recent 18-month period when the price of wheat to farmers fell 30 per cent and the price of bread increased? Would not there have been a great temptation for the government to step into the marketing, distribution and baking fields to try to make good on its promise that it could guarantee consumers cheap food by letting farm prices drop?

Let such situations develop in many commodities and the government would have to take over transportation and distribution in order to control prices to consumers.

Labor, too, would get caught in the mesh. Unions would find themselves with a "Brannan Plan." It might take a while, but it would come.

It is quite possible that a paternalistic government for a time might give one group more than it earns. There are plenty of examples. But, if this is to remain a nation of freemen, it is quite impossible politically for it to be done over the long pull.

We Get Only What We Earn

Eventually, if all groups get in on the something-for-nothing take, we all will find ourselves poorer. In the final analysis, what all of us get is what all of us earn; no more.

We in the Farm Bureau are not contending that all consumer subsidies are bad. Several of them, when operated on the basis of need, make sense; a sound food stamp plan and the school lunch program are examples. We should continue to study ways of raising dietary standards of the poorer-fed. At the same time we should be constantly trying to find new opportunities for them to earn a more adequate income.

But paying a part of everybody's grocery bill out of taxes would be mighty costly and extremely dangerous.

Farmers definitely want and need a sound farm program. Why? Because farm production is relatively stable, while farm prices fluctuate widely. In contrast, in a highly organized industrial economy, industrial prices and wage rates remain relatively stable while production and employment levels fluctuate.

Farm prices go up faster and further than the general price level, and farm costs go up more slowly. But farm prices drop faster and further than the general price level, and costs come down more slowly; and this makes farming especially vulnerable to swings in the business cycle.

It is in the general interest to provide a farm program which will put a brake on a downward swing in farm prices. Likewise, it is in the consumer's interest because it is his best possible assurance of a continuing supply of good food at reasonable prices.

But in considering what kind of farm program is best, we must remember one basic fact: *The basis for rural prosperity is, first and foremost, high production per man and a well-distributed real income in the rest of the economy.*

Nonfarm people are most of the people. They are the farmer's market; they produce his real wages. If factories are humming, employment is high, industrial labor is productive and well-paid, the stores will be filled with goods, and services will be freely available at reasonable prices. Demand for the farmer's produce will be strong.

This is the basis for real farm prosperity. You can't pull the farmer up by his suspenders if most of the people are hard up.

It is vital, then, that we maintain an expanding economy. There must be high productivity and full employment. We must exhaust every opportunity to stabilize the general price level. As we accomplish this, we reduce the need for commodity-by-commodity government programs.

Too, we need desperately to maintain sizable exports of crops like cotton, wheat, tobacco, dried fruit and lard. To do this, we must develop an affirmative import trade policy and aggressively seek the widespread public support such a policy deserves.

American agriculture can produce more than America can consume. To restrict our output purely to the needs of the domestic market is to sell American agriculture short. A desirable farm program should be designed to fit into a dynamic, expanding domestic and world economy.

By causing the level of price supports to vary with the supply of, and the demand for, each agricultural commodity we can provide farmers a cushion against unreasonable price declines. Flexible price supports would assure consumers at home and abroad of the continued opportunity to share in the abundant output, efficiently produced, of American farms. The underlying philosophy of the present farm program, which has evolved out of our experiences since 1933, is consistent with this objective.

Flexible price supports would stimulate production of livestock and livestock products, which would conserve the soil and upgrade the American diet. By permitting a downward adjustment in support prices when supplies become burdensome, the flexible program would encourage farmers to shift land from production of grain crops to grasses and legumes and promote better land use. At the same time, lower support prices for surplus grains would encourage grain feeding of livestock—resulting in more and better livestock.

Wheat Surplus and Livestock

An indication of how increased livestock production can eliminate grain surpluses is contained in a recent study made at Michigan State College. It shows that an increase of about 2 per cent in our livestock production would have more than absorbed our surplus stocks of wheat in the period since 1930. Consumers should not miss the point that expanded production and use of livestock products make for better and more nutritious diets.

Farmers sincerely believe that flexible price supports—endorsed in the 1948 platforms of both major political parties—would provide necessary safeguards to farmers, minimize the necessity of controls over production, and assure American consumers of a firm supply of nutritious food at reasonable prices.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, the present law, is not without defects. Its support prices are the highest in our peacetime history. Rigid price supports, temporarily continued on several commodities, are so high they will encourage overproduction and, at the same time, discourage both domestic consumption and export.

Thus, instead of increasing farm income, they may decrease it.

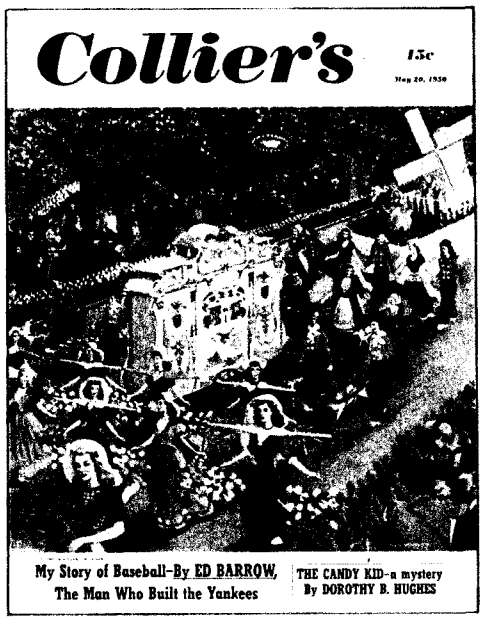
Congress postponed full application of the flexible price support formula until January 1, 1952, and provided for the use of a dual parity yardstick through 1953. The American Farm Bureau Federation never agreed to this; we thought the flexible price supports should have gone into effect last year, as was originally proposed.

We in the Farm Bureau are convinced that the higher the level of price supports, the greater the controls and regimentation that will result. We recognize that some controls will be needed occasionally if we are to use price supports to protect farm prices against unreasonable declines. At the same time, with flexible price supports, we would hope to hold controls to a minimum.

The present farm program, approved by Congress in 1948 and amended in 1949, does provide a brake on sharp downturns in agricultural prices. This program ought to be given a chance to work. It has not yet had that chance.

The Brannan Plan would stifle the farmer's initiative, and regiment him. It would bring a pyramided government piled onto the taxpayers' backs. It would in the long run mean lower per family income for farmers, higher-priced food for consumers and everybody would pay plenty. THE END

NEXT WEEK



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Secret of Coon Castle

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

home. They didn't want me turning into a woodsy and prowling all day after a hound-dog. They wanted me to get away from Cane River and become a lawyer or a doctor. But it was summertime and there was no school and every day I'd contrive to get away to the woods. I'd watch and wait for old Nat's comings and goings.

There was magic for me in all the old man said. He recognized no gulf between the human and animal worlds. He always spoke of an animal as if it were a human being. But I'd never been able to get close to him. He didn't like kids hanging about his cabin. He'd answer a question or two in a monosyllable, but after that you couldn't get a word out of him.

I had an old Sharps rifle and all my spare time I ranged the woods, stalking game, practicing with the rifle till I could drive a nail in a tree at a hundred feet and bark a squirrel on a branch ninety feet overhead, bringing it down stunned or dead and never a mark on it, with all the skill of a Leatherstocking hero. I learned dozens of secrets of the woods: the hillsides where the deer bedded and fed; where to find the buried eggs of turtles and alligators in the spring; the secret place in the swamp where the white egrets nested; the daily habits of Big Reddy, the Cane River fox.

Reddy was a well-known character and the smartest fox in the country. I had seen him many times. Most hunters of the region had run him at one time or another with dogs. Often my father had. There was very little chance of bringing Reddy to earth or laying him low. He knew every dog in the region. He'd made fools of more dogs than there were hairs in his brush. But that was the kind of fox most hunters liked.

Everyone had wondered where Reddy denned. I tried to find out that summer, but I never could. I found out something else about him, though. For years he'd been a respectable fox, but now he was falling from grace. Once I met him at high noon with a fresh-killed pullet in his mouth. Another time he passed close by me with two telltale feathers on his lean chops. I didn't like to see that. But I kept all those things to myself. I thought that knowing about them might be useful sometime.

Often I tried to spy on old Nat, but that took a deal of doing. Nat was sharp as a lynx cat. You never could see him first. If you tried to follow him he'd know it in a minute. He'd break his trail and trick you and then you'd feel like a fool and take off for yonder like a rated dog.

ONCE when I was lying hidden in dense fern by the river, Nat happened by along the trail. It was fifty or sixty feet away and he couldn't have had an inkling I was there, yet when he came opposite he stopped short and studied the ferns suspiciously. Then he went swiftly out of sight. He knew someone was there watching him. There never was another woodsman like Nat.

One day I learned one of his close secrets. I saw his pet coon leave the cabin and I followed him, right to the foot of Coon Castle, and I watched him climb up to the second hollow in the trunk and pop inside. All coons look alike, but I knew then that Nat's pet was old Bandit himself, the wiliest coon in the Cane River country. I thought about that for weeks.

The book of the woods opened for me fast. I was learning through patient watching the things old Nat was born with or knew instinctively. I had sworn never to demean myself to him. I maintained an Indian dignity and an aloofness the equal of his own. It was hard.

Once in the fall we met on a far trail. My heart leaped as always at sight of him; I wanted to hurry forward and cry out, "Hello, Nat." But I said nothing and stood looking at the woods as he came silently up. Some ground spiders were coming up a nearby rise through the dead leaves; a couple of others were climbing the trunk of a hickory.

"Goin' to turn cold right soon," I said briefly, indicating the spiders. I hazarded that guess from something I had read about spiders seeking high ground before bad weather came.

He nodded almost imperceptibly. His glance took in my rifle, not without approval. "Might even snow," he said, and pointed beyond my shoulder with a knobby, parchment-colored finger with a jagged broken nail. How many hundredweight of earth, rock and trap-iron had Nat handled, I wondered.

I turned the way he pointed and my sharp eye picked out a swamp rabbit half hidden in its form. Its coat had turned almost white, an unusual thing in these parts. I nodded as Nat had done, then we passed on silently, as if we had talked too long and said too much. Once I half turned my head and was aware of Nat gazing after me. A great pride filled me.

But greater pride was to come, for my prediction came true. A week later it turned cold. There was a big rain and later it snowed, a very rare thing hereabouts. It was colder than any winter we'd ever known.

Not long after that my big chance came. Sometimes Nat was paid to catch animals for zoos or furnish specimens for some museum. Down in old Freed Pennix' turpentine woods one day I heard Nat telling Freed that he had a museum order for a black fox squirrel, one of the rarest and shyest animals of the woods. He'd be paid enough to tide him through the winter, Nat said, if only he could find one.

"It's five year or more since I set eyes on a black flier," Freed Pennix said. "Rare as blue roses, them scapers are. You'll hunt far."

I felt the hair stir along my neck as I listened. I didn't say anything, but next morning early I was standing under a big pine by Nat's cabin when he opened his door. It gave him a rare start as I stepped out of the shadows beside him—the kind of start he'd often given me.

"I know where there's a black flier, Nat," I said in a voice quiet as the dusk beneath the trees. "I'll show you if you want."

His pale blue eyes looked square at me, and I saw that I had him at last. He stepped into the cabin and came out with a light gun. We moved away, two shadows among shades, troubling the stillness of the woods so little as hardly to have been there at all.

A whole week I had spent watching each day from the depths of a fern thicket till I discovered the hole in an old dead maple where a fox squirrel lived. It was one of the secrets I had guarded long, and I gave it to Nat. We were more than an hour creeping up to the secret place in the woods, and it was another hour before the fox squirrel appeared, clinging to a high limb exactly like a clump of dry Spanish moss.

Nat got him—a beautiful eye-shot at a hundred feet. It had to be that way, for that specimen was going to be mounted.

NAT waited for a space in complete silence, after all movement had stopped in the leaves below the maple. He never failed to do this after taking a life. It was the instinctive ritual of a natural mystic. Nat hated to take life, though he was a hunter born.

"I'll connive to give you somethin' for this, kid," he said as he picked up the prize.

"Don't want anything! I know where there's another black one," I said. This was not quite true; but it was effective.

Then, using sheer will power, I turned and slipped away in the woods.

What old Nat connived for me was my first deer hunt. The season had come round and Nat stopped me in the woods one day and told me to be at his cabin before daylight next morning. Deer hunting was a man's business, and Nat, the mightiest hunter of them all, was taking me with him as a gunmate.

In the misty cold before the dawn we moved like two phantoms up along the hardwood slopes behind his cabin. I was taut as a bowstring and hair-trigger nervous. I might muff something, and then Nat would snort and cast me off in disdain. Killing your first buck—that was equal to coming into manhood in those days. Young Freeman Tedder had shot him a buck at fifteen, but no kid I'd heard of had ever done it, going on thirteen.

This was a still-hunt, an Indian hunt. As

COLLIER'S

"I bet I waste two or three hours a day just *thinking*—and I'm going to cut it out!"

JEFFERSON MACHAMER

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we neared the ancient feeding ground of the deer, Nat whispered a few words and we spread out silently, two fledged hunters, equal and reliant on one another. It was wonderful.

Soon we were far beyond sight or sound of each other. The mist swirled in smoky streamers against a landscape vague and heroic. Everything was cold and vast. The slightest sound was magnified in the stillness. The chuckle of the distant Branch became the lapping of the storied Ohio, river of danger. I thought about Nat, of Rogers' Rangers, Chief Pontiac the proud, old Chingachgook and Asher Norris threading the perilous country of the Delawares.

IT WASN'T near light yet when, ahead of me, a drifting whorl of mist stopped, moved on, stopped again, then bounded buoyantly down the slope. The old Sharps leaped to my shoulder. My eye had always been a keen one in the woods, but that shot was a miracle, for there was neither time for eye to lower to the sights nor light to aim. Yet whatever had bounded through the air pitched forward with a bleat and a rattle of stones and stayed bone-still. It was a fat buck, and as I came up, it lay as if it were asleep, a ball through its heart. The buck was tan-gray all over like the very stuff of dusk.

A kid's faith is a strong thing. That was what won for me that morning—and all that concentration on marksmanship that had gone beyond skill into intuition. I was standing still a little way off, the way Nat did over a kill, when he came up. The dawn was just beginning to break so that I could see the look on his face as he stopped and peered.

"Six tines," he muttered. "And clean through the heart." His voice was changed. "I'll liken to call that a shot."

It was almighty praise from him. For a minute I felt queer and I almost cried—but I went stolid instead, holding my feelings in. I knew English, good school English, but I said simply, "I'd liken to give you the meat and hide, Nat."

He nodded as he knelt with his knife and set about the skinning and cutting up. The head I've always kept. It's mounted over my living-room fireplace. . . .

Well, you'd think that would be about all, wouldn't you? But it wasn't. I was due for still another winning that fall. It was my year.

The time had come round for my father to begin talking fox again. Once each year in late fall he would have a high old fox hunt with dogs. Usually it was Big Reddy he and his friends would run. Father wasn't out after the fox's brush; it was the pleasures of the hunt he loved: the long day afield, the lovely mournful cadence of hound music talking to him across miles of woods and fields. And no other fox could give him half the sport that Reddy could.

But this year it was all different. Reddy had been getting too big for his pants. He'd been hightailing his way about the country all summer, stealing ducks and chickens from almost every farmer along the river. Father himself had lost a couple. Infamously familiar with men and dogs, Reddy had been robbing henhouses where others of his kind didn't dare to trespass. He fed on eggs and young chicks, too, whenever the chance offered. By fall he had achieved a reputation beyond that of any fox that had ever raided the region. Every settler knew him, but by November they'd turned ugly and swore to hunt him down.

Reddy's latest escapade had been the raiding of the poultry yards of old Cash Wyble, a well-to-do landowner down at New Canaan. What Cash Wyble said carried a long way through the piney woods. Cash was mad, and he organized a general fox hunt for the express purpose of bringing Big Reddy low. So Father's hunt was spoiled.

The time for the big hunt was the last day of November. I was excited about it all until I saw that Father had no pleasure in this hunt. He and several other old-timers who took pride in the chase refused even to lend their hounds to Cash's hunt.

For this was a chase that broke the ancient and time-honored rule of the hunt, established for hundreds of years, which said that only the dogs might do the killing. Big Reddy was to be shot on sight, Cash Wyble had decreed, providing the dogs couldn't bring him down. Poultry or no poultry, that went against the grain in Father. Old Nat, of course, had no truck with such affairs.

The hunt started on a Saturday morning with the biggest turnout the piney woods had known in many years. Cash Wyble was there with his two hounds, and Freed Pennix and old Sam Wetherwax; the Ballard boys with their coon hounds and old Rashe Howe from Hat Creek with his nine grown sons mounted on mules. The dog pack, swelled by mongrels from the town, numbered nineteen. The mounted drive spread out in a great half circle. The sound swept for half a mile ahead of them.

Father moped around the house that morning. Old Nat, I could not find at all. Weakening, I went up into the hills to keep tab on the chase. I didn't want to see Reddy killed, but I couldn't stay indoors. I couldn't stay anywhere. I read the sounds that came down the breeze, and I saw the hunters get the first glimpse of their quarry a little before noon.

Reddy was used to the chase. Warned by the trail song of the pack, he'd taken it easy for the first two hours, trying to lose them among the maze of trails along Turkey Branch. His wiles came to him as he needed them, but he'd never known a chase like this. At midday, with the dogs pressing close, he sought the rocky hill crests that held little scent. Twice I saw him from a distant hill. His dripping tongue lolled out and I knew how his heart must be pounding. He was using every trick he knew now to throw off the dogs. All that I didn't see, I could piece together by the sounds.

The long grim afternoon chase began. Neither dogs nor hunters were wasting strength in noise now. Reddy continued to match and mock the best wiles of the pack, but his lead was shortening. Once he all but lost them when he leaped a pasture fence and ran among a herd of cattle to cover his trail. But the far-ranging pack soon worked out the riddle.

I ranged far and aimlessly that afternoon. I was miserable. My heart was all with the fox. To me as to Father, he was an old friend. Old Nat was nowhere to be found.

Four o'clock came. The warm trail song from the hills never slackened now. The dogs were working out Reddy's tricks as fast as he could execute them, allowing him no chance to rest his straining lungs and legs. Far to the south, tattered storm clouds were gathering. It would rain.

ANOTHER hour and the broken, angry notes of old Cash Wyble's horn sounded through the hills. The dogs were at fault, and I knew why. Reddy had run across a terrified gray fox, mingled his own trail with the other's, then leaped aside among rocks, forcing the foolish gray to run for him. It was glorious—the craft of the thing. I'd seen it all on a far hillside. I stood up and shouted; I couldn't help it. The dogs had rushed on for a long way after the gray and they hadn't yet found where the trail broke.

And now Reddy was threading the cane-lined trails along the Branch, just below where I sat, while the baffled baying of the pack sounded nearly a mile away. The old fox must have run close to fifty miles since morning—a record even for him. But he was near the end of his strength. Twice I saw him in the thickets below. He moved in a maze. His hindquarters rolled with weakness as he went, and there was a heavy ball of mud plastered to his trailing brush from the many streams and plowed fields he had crossed. I saw him pause to drink, and fall forward in the water. But he had put it over on them, the old strategist. I was exultant as I descended the bluff toward the stream. I felt light as the sunlight. . . .

I moved down the Branch toward old Nat's cabin, where Reddy's trail seemed to

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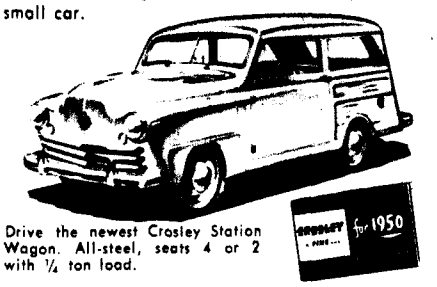

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be heading. He must have his den close by, I thought, as I hurried along the stream. I caught one last glimpse of him slipping through the laurels. I crept up quietly to the big clearing where Coon Castle stood, watching and listening, wondering how Reddy had vanished so completely.

As I stood there, a sudden clamor from the throats of nineteen dogs burst out again in broken harmony as if a dozen church bells had started clanging all at once. They were much nearer now, baying the trail song. They'd worked out Reddy's ruse. My eye swept over the clearing, the woods and the gathering clouds above them in speculation. Then suddenly I saw it. Only the sharpest woods eye would have picked out what I saw, for there'd been no movement. It was the mask of Big Reddy. He was looking out of the highest hole near the top of Coon Castle!

He was sitting, calm and easy up there, smiling a little with flacking tongue. There must have been a sort of ladder going up inside the rotting trunk, and he was resting at the top of it, looking out at the world. And then just below him in the other hole, the masked face of old Bandit showed for a moment. Coon and fox in a single tree!

As I stood there staring, I suddenly knew someone was beside me. It was old Nat. He'd stepped out of the thicket behind, without a sound. He saw the look on my face and I knew my secret was his.

"Oh, Nat!" The words were wrung from me—a sort of gasp. His eyes held mine a moment, questioning.

I said, "No, Nat! I promise!"

"They're a-comin'," he said.

Dark clouds were welling above the woods. There was a gust of wind, and big drops of rain began tapping the leaves above us. Dusk had almost come.

The hound chorus was very close now. Nat and I just stood there waiting, as thunder rent the clouds apart and the first rain slanted through the trees. Every minute was against the hunters now. The storm, the day's end—both worked to keep Big Reddy's secret.

Then the first of the dogs came tearing up, all dripping with Branch water, racing the storm. The hunters, two or three minutes behind, were a soaked and sorry lot. At the edge of the clearing the pack was confounded. It was as if the fox had run himself clean out of scent as he reached the glade. The dogs spread out and quartered back and forth, silent and puzzled. One or two trotted right over to Coon Castle and smelled round the hollow. My heart was thudding. The fox was out of sight, but I shook in my boots. What would happen when they found his hide-out! Nat's eye turned to me, signaling silence, but the dogs left the tree as if they were dejected. I never knew till much later that the taint of fungus, growing thick as it does around the tree and clearing, kills the scent of an animal.

I just stood there close to Nat, showing nothing, but holding hard inside, helping to weave a magic ring-pass-not round old Reddy that none might penetrate.

FINALLY Cash rode up and called out to Nat, "Seen anything of a red fox passing this way?" Nat just pointed an arm vaguely upstream, without answering.

Then we heard Cash calling the hunt off, and they were gone, men and dogs. I stood there in the soft rain, the growing night, with Nat standing beside me. I heard Nat's voice like part of the dark itself, saying: "I'm liken to be right proud of you, kid."

For just an instant his hand lay on my shoulder as he said it. It was almost more than I could bear. Tears ran with the rain down my wet face, but they went unseen in the dimness. That was my great winning, my initiation into the cult of finished woodsmen.

As we turned toward the Branch trail, Nat spoke again—whole sentences this time something reserved for only the chosen few, as he told me one of his deepest secrets. I knew something about the strange comradeship that sometimes works between animals. But only Nat knew why Big Reddy was allowed to take sanctuary in the depths of Coon Castle, a stronghold that for centuries had harbored only coons.

One night two years before, Nat declared, Reddy had come upon old Bandit helplessly caught by his forepaws in a trap. He hated traps and he'd dug the thing up, clog, chain and all. And later, deep in the hollow of Coon Castle, Bandit's wife must have worked the trap loose with her black monkeylike forepaws that were almost like hands. Neither fox nor coon had ever forgotten.

THE END

"Actually he got the raise but L.D. doesn't want the rest of the staff to think so"

COLLIER'S JEFF KEATE

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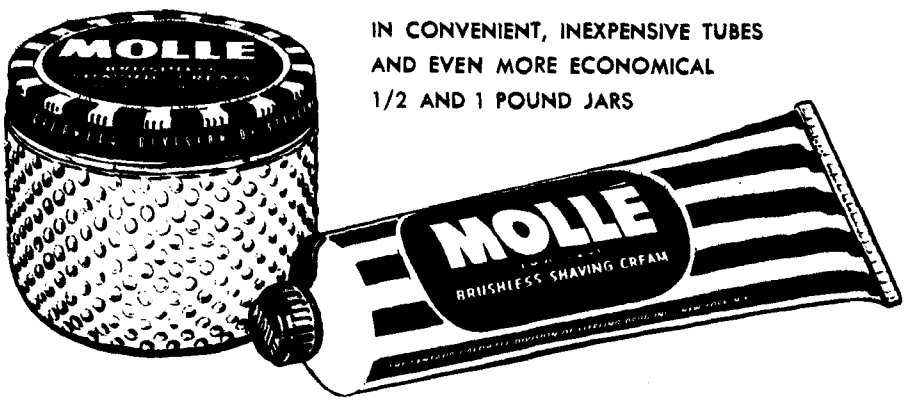

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To the Future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

door, William holding Susan's arm firmly. They did not look back when Mr. Simms called, "Oh, just one other thing." He paused and then slowly spoke the words:

"Twenty-one fifty-five A.D."

Susan shut her eyes and felt the earth falter under her. She kept going, into the fiery plaza, seeing nothing. . . .

THEY locked the door of their hotel room. And then she was crying and they were standing in the dark, and the room tilted under them. Far away, firecrackers exploded, there was laughter in the plaza.

"What a damned, loud nerve," said William. "Him sitting there, looking us up and down like animals, smoking his damn' cigarettes, drinking his drinks. I should have killed him then!" His voice was nearly hysterical. "He even had the nerve to use his real name to us. The Chief of the Searchers. And the thing about my pant legs. I should have pulled them up when I sat. It's an automatic gesture of this day and age. When I didn't do it, it set me off from the others. It made *him* think: Here's a man who never wore pants, a man used to breech-uniforms and future styles. I could kill myself for giving us away!"

"No, no, it was my walk, these high heels, that did it. Our haircuts, so new, so fresh. Everything about us odd and uneasy."

William turned on the light. "He's still testing us. He's not positive of us, not completely. We can't run out on him, then. We can't make him certain. We'll go to Acapulco, leisurely."

"Maybe he *is* sure of us, but is just playing."

"I wouldn't put it past him. He's got all the time in the world. He can dally here if he wants, and bring us back to the Future sixty seconds after we left it. He might keep us wondering for days, laughing at us."

Susan sat on the bed, wiping the tears from her face, smelling the old smell of charcoal and incense.

"They won't make a scene, will they?"

"They won't dare. They'll have to get us alone to put us in the Time Machine and send us back."

"There's a solution then," she said. "We'll never be alone, we'll always be in crowds."

Footsteps sounded outside their locked door.

They turned out the light and undressed in silence. The footsteps went away.

Susan stood by the window looking down at the plaza in the darkness. "So that building there is a church?"

"Yes."

"I've often wondered what a church looked like. It's been so long since anyone saw one. Can we visit it tomorrow?"

"Of course. Come to bed."

They lay in the dark room.

Half an hour later, their phone rang. She lifted the receiver.

"Hello?"

"The rabbits may hide in the forest," said a voice, "but a fox can always find them."

She replaced the receiver and lay back straight and cold in the bed.

Outside, in the year 1938, a man played three tunes upon a guitar, one following another. . . .

During the night, she put her hand out and almost touched the year 2155. She felt her fingers slide over cool spaces of time, as over a corrugated surface, and she heard the insistent thump of marching feet, a million bands playing a million military tunes. She saw the fifty thousand rows of disease-culture in their aseptic glass tubes, her hand reaching out to them at her work in that huge factory in the future. She saw the tubes of leprosy, bubonic, typhoid, tuberculosis. She heard the great explosion and saw her hand burned to a wrinkled plum, felt it recoil from a concussion so immense that the world was lifted and let fall, and all the buildings broke and people hemorrhaged and lay silent. Great volcanoes, machines, winds, avalanches slid down to silence and she awoke, sobbing, in the bed, in Mexico, many years away . . .

In the early morning, drugged with the single hour's sleep they had finally been able to obtain, they awoke to the sound of loud automobiles in the street. Susan peered down from the iron balcony at a small crowd of eight people only now emerging, chattering, yelling, from trucks and cars with red lettering on them. A crowd of Mexicans had followed the trucks.

"*Qué pasa?*" Susan called to a little boy. The boy replied.

Susan turned back to her husband. "An American motion picture company, here on location."

"Sounds interesting." William was in the shower. "Let's watch them. I don't think we'd better leave today. We'll try to lull Simms."

For a moment, in the bright sun, she had forgotten that somewhere in the hotel, waiting, was a man smoking a thousand cigarettes, it seemed. She saw the eight loud, happy Americans below and wanted to call to them: "Save me, hide me, help me! I'm from the year 2155!"

But the words stayed in her throat. The functionaries of Travel In Time, Inc., were not foolish. In your brain, before you left on your trip, they placed a psychological block. You could tell no one your true time or birthplace, nor could you reveal any of the future to those in the past. The past and the future must be protected from each other. Only with this hindrance were people allowed to travel unguarded through the ages. The future must be protected from any change brought about by her people traveling in the past. Even if Susan wanted to with all of her heart, she could not tell any of those happy people below in the plaza who she was, or what her predicament had become.

"What about breakfast?" said William.

BREAKFAST was being served in the immense dining room. Ham and eggs for everyone. The place was full of tourists. The film people entered, all eight of them, six men and two women, giggling, shoving chairs about. And Susan sat near them feeling the warmth and protection they offered, even when Mr. Simms came down the lobby stairs, smoking his Turkish cigarette with great intensity. He nodded at them from a distance, and Susan nodded back, smiling, because he couldn't do anything to them here, in front of eight film people and twenty other tourists.

"Those actors," said William. "Perhaps I could hire two of them, say it was a joke, dress them in our clothes, have them drive off in our car, when Simms is in such a spot where he can't see their faces. If two people pretending to be us could lure him off for a few hours, we might make it to Mexico City. It'd take years to find us there!"

"Hey!"

A fat man, with liquor on his breath, leaned on their table.

"American tourists!" he cried. "I'm so sick of seeing Mexicans, I could kiss you!" He shook their hands. "Come on, eat with us. Misery loves company. I'm Misery, this is Miss Gloom, and Mr. and Mrs. Do-We-Hate-Mexico! We all hate it. But we're here for some preliminary shots for a damn' film. The rest of the crew arrives tomorrow. My name's Joe Melton, I'm a director, and if this ain't a hell of a country—funerals in the streets, people dying—come on, move over, join the party, cheer us up!"

Susan and William were both laughing.

"Am I funny?" Mr. Melton asked the immediate world.

"Wonderful!" Susan moved over.

Mr. Simms was glaring across the dining room at them.

She made a face at him.

Mr. Simms advanced among the tables.

Sunday, May 14

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"Mr. and Mrs. Travis!" he called. "I thought we were breakfasting together, alone?"

"Sorry," said William.

"Sit down, pal," said Mr. Melton. "Any friend of theirs is a pal of mine."

Mr. Simms sat. The film people talked loudly and while they talked, Mr. Simms said, quietly, "I hope you slept well."

"Did you?"

"I'm not used to spring mattresses," replied Mr. Simms, wryly. "But there are compensations. I stayed up half the night trying new cigarettes and foods. Odd, fascinating. A whole new spectrum of sensation, these ancient vices."

"We don't know what you're talking about," said Susan.

SIMMS laughed. "Always the play acting. It's no use. Nor is this stratagem of crowds. I'll get you alone soon enough. I'm immensely patient."

"Say," Mr. Melton broke in, "is this guy giving you any trouble?"

"It's all right."

"Say the word and I'll give him the bum's rush."

Melton turned back to yell at his associates. In the laughter, Mr. Simms went on: "Let us come to the point. It took me a month of tracing you through towns and cities to find you, and all of yesterday to be sure of you. If you come with me quietly, I might be able to get you off with no punishment—if you agree to go back to work on the Hydrogen-Plus bomb."

"We don't know what you're talking about."

"Stop it!" cried Simms, irritably. "Use your intelligence! You know we can't let you get away with this escape. Other people in the year 2155 might get the same idea and do the same. We need people."

"To fight your wars," said William.

"Bill!"

"It's all right, Susan. We'll talk on his terms now. We can't escape."

"Excellent," said Simms. "Really, you've both been incredibly romantic, running away from your responsibilities."

"Running away from horror."

"Nonsense. Only a war."

"What are you guys talking about?" asked Mr. Melton.

Susan wanted to tell him. But you could only speak in generalities. The psychological block in your mind allowed that. Generalities, such as Simms and William were now discussing.

"Only *the* war," said William. "Half the world dead of leprosy bombs!"

"Nevertheless," Simms pointed out, "the inhabitants of the Future resent you two hiding on a tropical isle, as it were, while they drop off the cliff into hell. Death loves death, not life. Dying people love to know that others die with them; it is a comfort to learn you are not alone in the kiln, in the grave. I am the guardian of their collective resentment against you two."

"Look at the guardian of resentments!" said Mr. Melton to his companions.

"The longer you keep me waiting, the harder it will go for you. We need you on the bomb project, Mr. Travis. Return now—no torture. Later, we'll force you to work and after you've finished the bomb, we'll try a number of complicated new devices on you, sir."

"I've got a proposition," said William. "I'll come back with you, if my wife stays here alive, safe, away from that war."

Mr. Simms debated. "All right. Meet me in the plaza in ten minutes. Pick me up in your car. Drive me to a deserted country spot. I'll have the Travel Machine pick us up there."

"Bill!" Susan held his arm tightly.

"Don't argue." He looked over at her. "It's settled." To Simms: "One thing. Last night, you could have got in our room and kidnaped us. Why didn't you?"

"Shall we say that I was enjoying myself?" replied Mr. Simms languidly, sucking his new cigar. "I hate giving up this wonderful atmosphere, this sun, this vacation. I regret leaving behind the wine and the cigarettes. Oh, how I regret it. The plaza then, in ten minutes. Your wife will be protected and may stay here as long as she wishes. Say your good-bys."

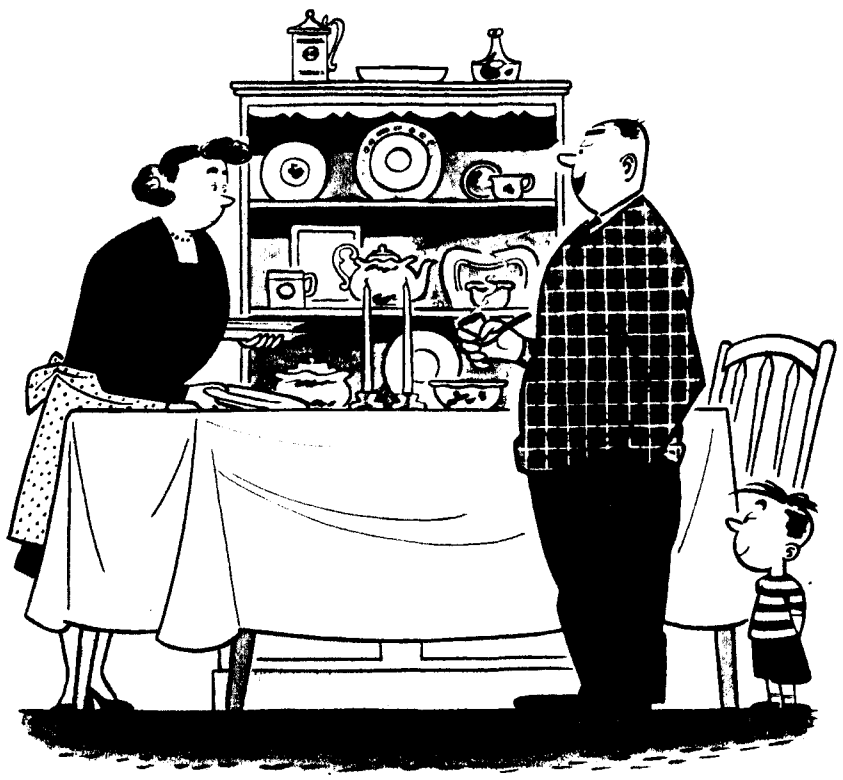
Mr. Simms arose and walked out.

"There goes Mr. Big-Talk!" yelled Mr. Melton at the departing gentleman. He turned and looked at Susan. "Hey. Someone's crying. Breakfast's no time for people to cry, now *is* it?"

AT NINE FIFTEEN, Susan stood on the balcony of their room, gazing down at the plaza. Mr. Simms was seated there, his neat legs crossed, on a delicate bronze bench. Biting the tip from a cigar, he lighted it tenderly.

Susan heard the throb of a motor, and far up the street, out of a garage and down the cobbled hill, slowly, came William in his car.

The car picked up speed. Thirty, now



COLLIER'S

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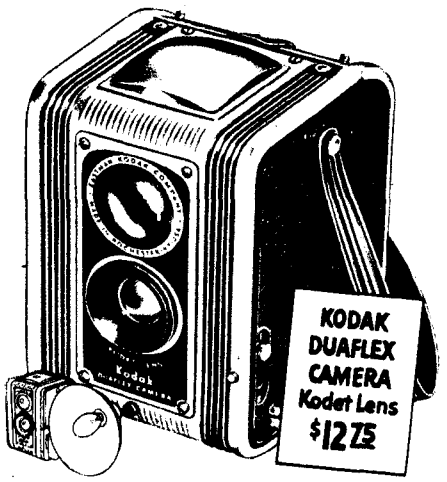

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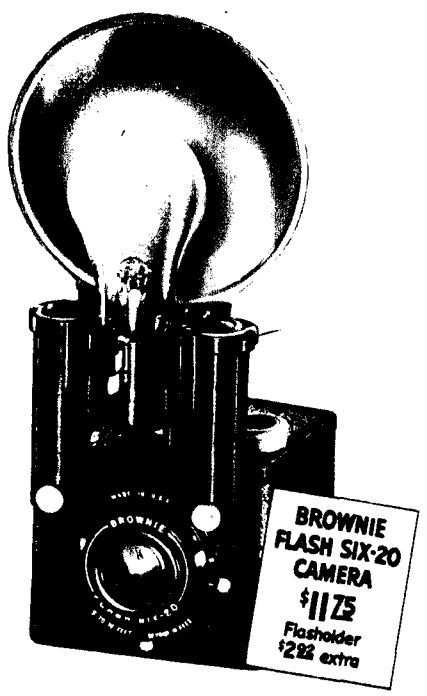

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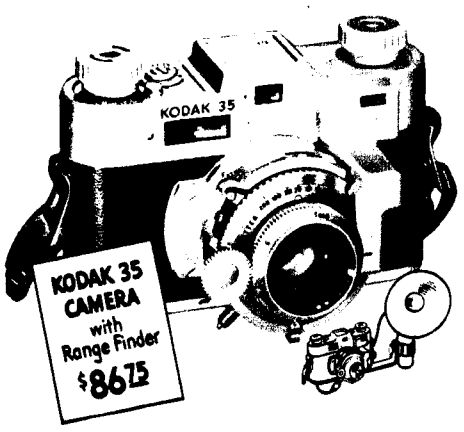

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forty, now fifty miles an hour. Chickens scattered before it.

Mr. Simms took off his white Panama hat and mopped his pink forehead, put his hat back on, and then saw the car.

It was rushing sixty miles an hour, straight on for the plaza.

"William!" screamed Susan.

The car hit the low plaza curb, thundering, jumped up, sped across the tiles toward the green bench where Mr. Simms now dropped his cigar, shrieked, flailed his hands, and was hit by the car. His body flew up and up in the air, and down, crazily, into the street.

On the far side of the plaza, one front wheel broken, the car stopped. People were running.

Susan went in and closed the balcony doors.

THEY came down the Official Palace steps together, arm in arm, their faces pale, at twelve noon.

"Adiós, señor," said the mayor behind them. *"Señora."*

They stood in the plaza where the crowd was pointing at the blood.

"Will they want to see you again?" asked Susan.

"No, we went over and over it. It was an accident. I lost control of the car. I wept for them. God knows I had to get my relief out somewhere. I *felt* like weeping. I hated to kill him. I've never wanted to do anything like that in my life."

"They won't prosecute you?"

"They talked about it, but no. I talked faster. They believe me. It was an accident. It's over."

"Where will we go? Mexico City?"

"The car's in the repair shop. It'll be ready at four this afternoon. Then we'll get the hell out."

"Will we be followed? Was Simms working alone?"

"I don't know. We'll have a little head start on them, I think."

The film people were coming out of the hotel as they approached. Mr. Melton hurried up, scowling. "Hey, I heard what happened. Too bad. Everything okay now? Want to get your minds off it? We're doing some preliminary shots up the street. You want to watch, you're welcome. Come on, do you good."

They went.

They stood on the cobbled street while the film camera was being set up. Susan looked at the road leading down and away, at the highway going to Acapulco and the sea, past pyramids and ruins and little adobe towns with yellow walls, blue walls, purple walls and flaming bougainvillaea. She thought: We shall take the roads, travel in clusters and crowds, in markets, in lobbies, bribe police to sleep near, keep double locks, but always the crowds, never alone again, always afraid the next person who passes might be another Simms. Never knowing if we've tricked and lost the Searchers. And always up ahead, in the Future, they'll wait for us to be brought back, waiting with their bombs to burn us and disease to rot us, and their police to tell us to roll over, turn around, jump through the hoop. And so we'll keep running through the forest, and we'll never ever stop or sleep well again in our lives.

A crowd gathered to watch the film being made. And Susan watched the crowd and the streets.

"Seen anyone suspicious?"

"No. What time is it?"

"Three o'clock. The car should be almost ready."

The test film was finished at three forty-five. They all walked down to the hotel, talking. William paused at the garage. "The car'll be ready at six," he said, coming out.

"But no later than that?"

"It'll be ready, don't worry."

In the hotel lobby they looked around for other men traveling alone, men who resembled Mr. Simms, men with new haircuts and too much cigarette smoke and cologne smell about them, but the lobby was empty. Going up the stairs, Mr. Melton said, "Well, it's been a long, hard day. Who'd like to put a header on it. Martini? Beer?"

"Maybe one."

The whole crowd pushed into Mr. Melton's room and the drinking began.

"Watch the time," said William.

TIME, thought Susan, if only they had time. All she wanted was to sit in the plaza all of a long, bright day in spring, with not a worry or a thought, with the sun on her face and arms, her eyes closed, smiling at the warmth—and never move, but just sleep in the Mexican sun . . .

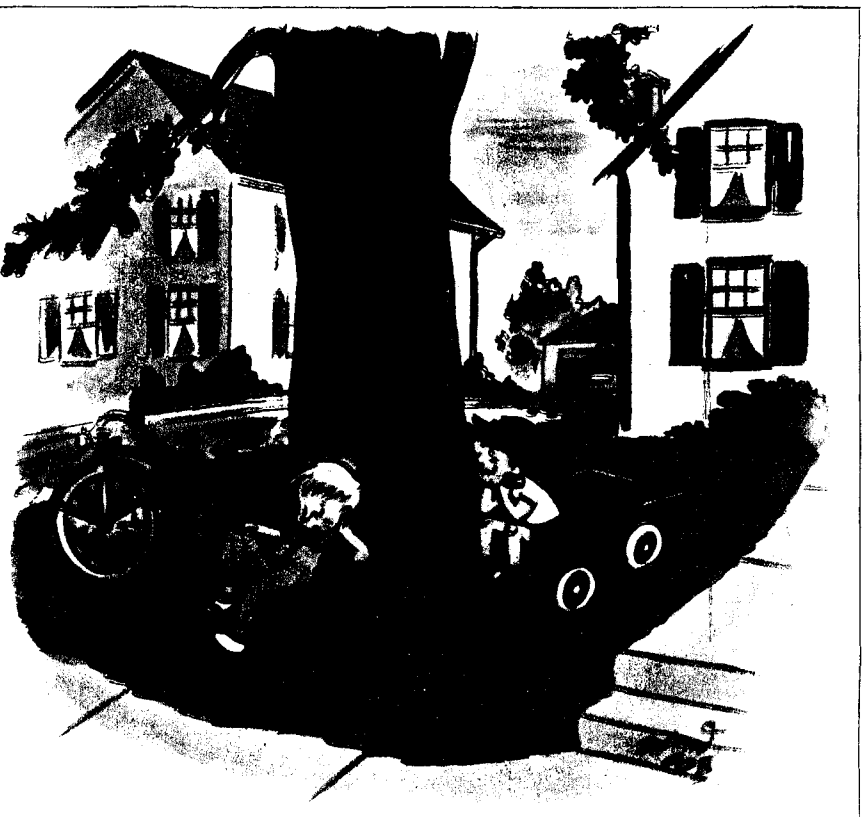
Mr. Melton opened the champagne.

"To a very beautiful lady, lovely enough for films," he said, toasting Susan. "I might even give you a test."

She laughed.

"I mean it," said Melton. "You're very nice. I could make you a movie star."

"And take me to Hollywood?"



COLLIER'S "I've been behaving myself lately, too. I guess we're just going through a phase" ROLAND COE

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WILLIAM SAKREN

Skirting the Truth

The first page has nothing but chats about fashions,
The second has heartaches and clandestine passions;
The third is concerned with obits and divorces,
The fourth with the planets in zodiac courses;
The fifth advertises Caribbean cruises,
The sixth page, at last, is where all of the news is.

Don't think that the newspaper editor's changed it—
It's merely the way that my wife rearranged it.

—FRANK R. CANNING

"Get the hell out of Mexico, sure!"

Susan glanced at William, and he lifted an eyebrow and nodded. It would be a change of scene, clothing, locale, name perhaps, and they would be traveling with eight other people, a good shield against any interference from the future.

"It sounds wonderful," said Susan.

She was feeling the champagne now, the afternoon was slipping by, the party was whirling about her, she felt safe and good and alive and truly happy for the first time in many years.

"What kind of film would my wife be good for?" asked William, refilling his glass.

Melton appraised Susan. The party stopped laughing and listened.

"Well, I'd like to do a story of suspense," said Melton. "A story of a man and wife, like yourselves."

"Go on."

"Sort of a war story, maybe," said the director, examining the color of his drink against the sunlight.

Susan and William waited.

"A story about a man and wife who live in a little house on a little street in the year 2155, maybe," said Melton. "This is ad lib, understand. But this man and wife are faced with a terrible war, Super-Plus Hydrogen bombs, censorship, death, in that year and—here's the gimmick—they escape into the past, followed by a man who they think is evil, but who is only trying to show them what their Duty is."

William dropped his glass to the floor.

Mr. Melton continued. "And this couple take refuge with a group of film people whom they learn to trust. Safety in numbers, they say to themselves."

SUSAN felt herself slip down into a chair. Everyone was watching the director. He took a little sip of wine. "Ah, that's a fine wine. Well, this man and woman, it seems, don't realize how important they are to the future. The man, especially, is the keystone to a new bomb metal. So the Searchers, let's call them, spare no trouble or expense to find, capture and take home the man and wife, once they get them totally alone, in a hotel room, where no one can see. Strategy. The Searchers work alone, or in groups of eight. One trick or another will do it. Don't you think it would make a wonderful film, Susan? Don't you, Bill?" He finished his drink.

Susan sat with her eyes straight ahead.

"Have a drink?" said Mr. Melton.

William's gun was out and fired three times, and one of the men fell, and the others ran forward. Susan screamed. A hand was clamped to her mouth. Now the gun was on the floor and William was struggling with the men holding him.

Mr. Melton said, "Please," standing there where he had stood, blood showing on his fingers. "Let's not make matters worse."

Someone pounded on the hall door.

"Let me in!"

"The manager," said Mr. Melton, dryly. He jerked his head. "Everyone, let's move!"

"Let me in. I'll call the police!"

Susan and William looked at each other quickly, and then at the door.

"The manager wishes to come in," said Mr. Melton. "Quick!"

A CAMERA was carried forward. From it shot a blue light which encompassed the room instantly. It widened out and the people of the party vanished, one by one.

"Quickly!"

Outside the window in the instant before she vanished, Susan saw the green land and the purple and yellow and blue and crimson walls and the cobbles flowing like a river, a man upon a burro riding into the warm hills, a boy drinking orange pop. She could feel the sweet liquid in her throat; she could see a man standing under a cool plaza tree with a guitar, could feel her hand upon the strings. And, far away, she could see the sea, the blue and tender sea; she could feel it roll her over and take her in.

And then she was gone. Her husband was gone.

The door burst wide. The manager and his staff rushed in.

The room was empty.

"But they were just here! I saw them come in, and now—gone!" cried the manager. "The windows are covered with iron grating; they couldn't get out that way!" . . .

In the late afternoon, the priest was summoned and they opened the room again and aired it out, and had him sprinkle holy water through each corner and give it his cleansing.

"What shall we do with these?" asked the charwoman.

She pointed to the closet, where there were sixty-seven bottles of chartreuse, cognac, *crème de cacao*, absinthe, vermouth, tequila, 106 cartons of Turkish cigarettes, and 198 yellow boxes of fifty-cent pure Havana-filler cigars. . . . THE END

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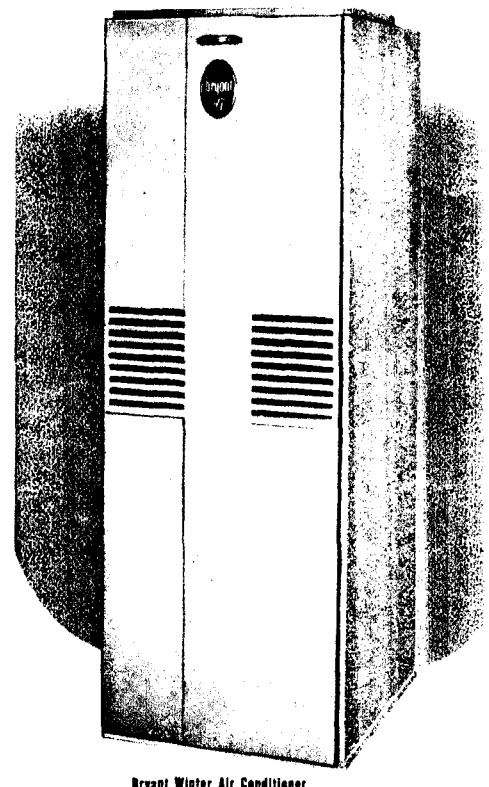

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"I think you are the nicest man I ever met," she said. "You treat me like a queen"

Maid's Service

By NORMAN KELEY

MOST of the way across the agitated Atlantic, Mrs. Harry O'Connor was as sick as a poisoned pup. She grew haggard from the loss of weight and her complexion developed a pale green overtone, as if she had spoiled a bit. Her husband remained hale and revoltingly cheery, which was bad enough, but when, on the day before they were to dock at Antwerp, Mrs. O'Connor found alien lipstick on his handkerchief, she blew her thatch. She assailed him bitterly for carrying on behind her back just because she was sick and had lost her looks.

The truth was, Mrs. O'Connor had lost her girlish prettiness some time ago. She had become a plain, rather colorless woman, and they both knew it. Harry didn't mind, because he loved her. Mrs. O'Connor minded so much she had grown a little churlish; and fear of losing her handsome, affable husband to younger, more succulent women had thrown her good sense out of joint.

Harry, a peace-loving man, tried to explain the lipstick. He said that at afternoon tea during heavy seas an elderly, garishly decorated female in the deck chair next to his had lost control of her cup. It had skidded off its saucer and dumped tea all over the old creature's face and front. Being a gentleman, he had given the woman his hanky and he guessed she had wiped her mouth with it.

"There you have it honey," he said, grinning. "I've been consorting with a gal so old and spavined she dribbles on her bib."

Her husband's comedy bounced off Mrs. O'Connor like a summer breeze off Pikes Peak. After a cold sneer at him for trying to foist a yarn like that off on her, she turned her back to him.

They landed at Antwerp and went to Lucerne. There, at the Hotel Altafer, they engaged a suite with a magnificent view of the lake and mountains. The service was superb. But Mrs. O'Connor, though she had lost her greenish hue, was morose. She wore the air of a woman betrayed.

On the second day in Lucerne, Herr Delker, the manager of the Altafer, invited them to a masked ball. The O'Connors accepted and sat at Herr Delker's table with Frau Delker and Herr Rudolph Schmitz, the manager of the Hotel Excelsior across the street. The hotels were run as a single enterprise; the employees of both hotels lived in the Excelsior, and the guests of one were welcome in the ballrooms of the other.

When they had dined, Herr Delker trotted Frau Delker out for a waltz, and Herr Schmitz, a tall blond Swiss, asked Mrs. O'Connor for the honor. Left alone, Harry wandered into the bar. He was standing there by himself when a woman wearing a white mask walked up to him. Though she had watched him for several minutes from her table, she hesitated before saying softly, "Will you dance with me, please?"

"Why, madam," he said, "with pleasure."

They danced on the small floor in the barroom. Harry was attracted to the woman from the start. She had a captivating accent and a high center of gravity, and her name was Anna. He bought her several drinks and a gardenia. Though they got on wonderfully, Harry didn't forsake Mrs. O'Connor. Every half hour or so he went into the ballroom to see how she was getting on. Each time, she was dancing with Herr Schmitz, so he returned to Anna. It pleased him to see Mrs. O'Connor finally getting a charge out of their trip.

About 1 A.M., Anna told him she had to be getting home and, smiling warmly, took his hand. "You make me feel very gay and important," she said. "I think you are the nicest man I ever met. Without knowing who I am, you treat me like a queen. It is something I can never forget. The gardenia is lovely. Thank you so much."

Harry insisted upon escorting her across the street to the Hotel Excelsior, where she lived.

They were making their way through the crowded street when Anna dropped her bag, scattering the contents. Harry knelt and retrieved the stuff. When he picked up her room key, he grinned and announced with bogus wolfishness that an O'Connor always unlocked his lady's door for her. He said that was one of the reasons there were so many O'Connors. Anna didn't laugh; instead, she gravely asked him to return her key. Chuckling at her anxiety, Harry refused.

Inside the Excelsior, the carnival was in an advanced state of revelry, and, before Harry could prevent it, Anna was swept away from him by a fat Swiss gotten up as an American cowboy. For an hour after that, Harry waited at the bar and scouted the ballroom, but Anna had vanished. He had another drink and returned to the Altafer, where he found his wife in bed. By that time, Harry had quite a skinful, but he managed to empty his pockets on the night table, hang up his pants, and crawl into his sack without disturbing his wife.

ABOUT nine in the morning, he was awakened by the sound of his wife warming up her tongue on nasty insinuations. "Got sloppy drunk, didn't you?" she cried. "And after giving me the royal run-around all night. Where *were* you?"

"Why, hell, hon," Harry said, figuring the truth couldn't foul an innocent man, "I peeked in three-four times and saw you having yourself a time with that Schmitz guy, so I hung around the bar, had a couple snorts with a gal, and I guess maybe we danced some. She lived just across the street so I walked her over. Soon's we got there, though, she got lost in the shuffle and I never did see her again. Okay, dear, commence firing."

Sweating out the ensuing tempest in the lee of his hang-over, Harry decided a cup of coffee might deaden his agonies. As he reached for the telephone, his eyes fell upon Anna's key lying where he'd left it on the night table between the beds. There was no doubt about it; the Excelsior's keys had blue, oblong tags on them, the Altafer's had round, red ones. He realized that if his wife saw the key with the blue tag, after what he'd just told her, he might as well turn in his suit. Thinking fast, he ordered breakfast and then, to keep his wife's fury from running down, he argued with her. Mrs. O'Connor never took her hot eyes off him long enough to notice the key.

When breakfast came, they went into the living room to eat. Mrs. O'Connor picked up her end of the quarrel and brought it along. While the waiter poured *café au lait* and the maid opened the shutters and tidied up the bedroom, Mrs. O'Connor railed at Harry for being an inconsiderate, philandering bum. Harry listened in silence and tried to figure an angle for getting back into the bedroom and stashing the key. But when the servants left, Mrs. O'Connor beat him to it. Complaining acidly about the pitiful brains of a maid who would open the windows on a cold morning, she got up and stalked into the bedroom for her fur jacket.

When she came back, shouldering irritably into the jacket, a key with the blue, oblong tag of the Hotel Excelsior on it tumbled from an inside pocket. Startled, Harry picked it up. It was Anna's key, all right; he recognized the number. How it had got from the night table to his wife's pocket he didn't know, but he was in no position to look a gift horse in the mouth.

"By golly," Harry said, "you had your nerve yelling at me all morning for what I did last night and all the time you've had the key to Schmitz's quarters in the Hotel Excelsior in your pocket. Don't try to explain, Fran—the key speaks for itself. That Schmitz didn't waste any time, did he?" Harry's face hardened. "I'm not going to raise any more hell about this, but if ever again I hear you open your mouth to accuse me of any funny business I'll 'ower the boom on you, Fran!"

He dropped Anna's key into the pocket of his robe. Looking hurt and betrayed, he strode from the room.

The odd thing was, Mrs. O'Connor never made the slightest effort to prove her innocence. And she looked happier than she had for months. It was a great comfort to a plain woman to have a husband who believed her attractive to other men.

Before the O'Connors left for Milan that afternoon, Harry stuck a hundred-dollar bill in an envelope, wrote *For Anna* on it, and with the faintest of winks handed it to the maid as he went out. In return, he was given the faintest of smiles. When he had gone, the maid took the envelope back to her room in the basement of the Hotel Excelsior, where the employees of both hotels lived. Smiling wistfully, she set it on the mantel, beside the gardenia and the white mask. THE END

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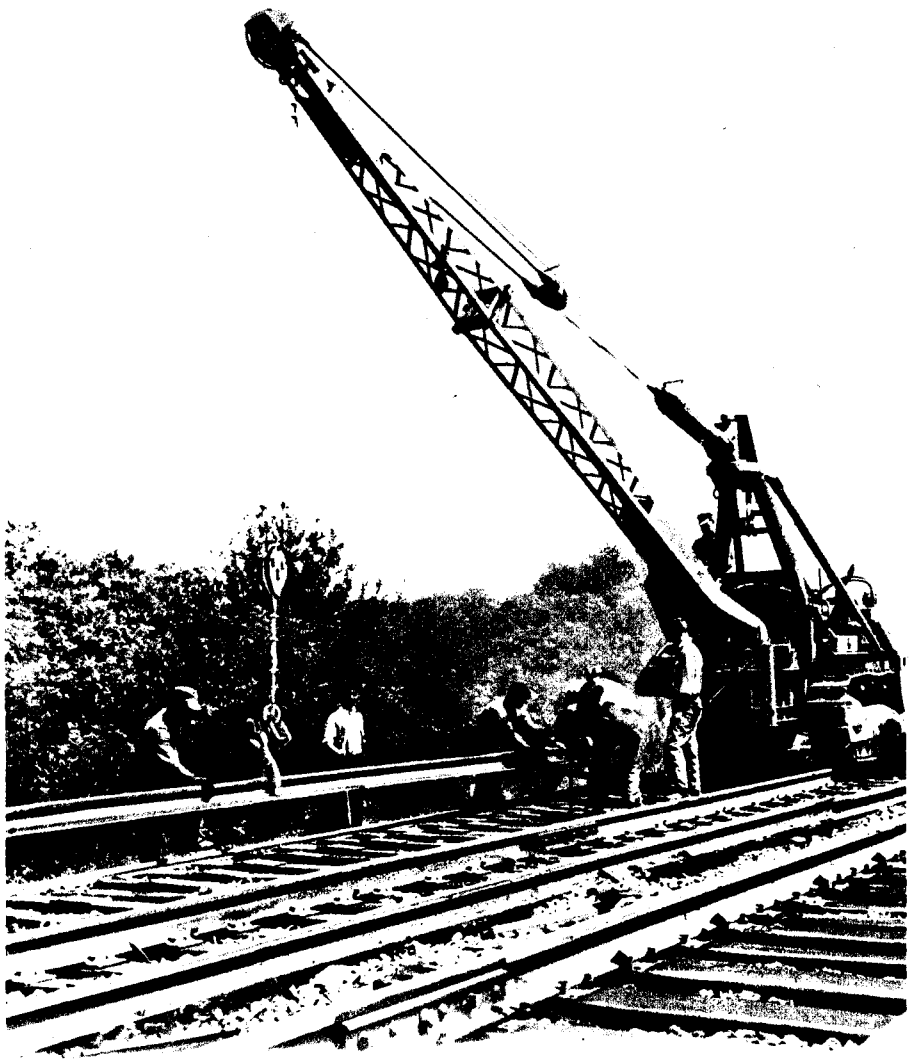

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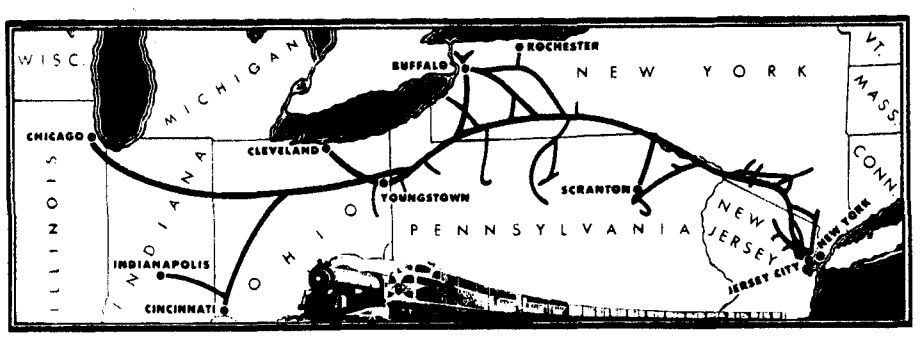

Test Pilot for Our New A-Bomb

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

chosen to head it not only to be able to hold his own with scientists and to keep tabs on a vast organization, but also to root out petty politicking and unify a mixed contingent into a team.

On this score the Joint Chiefs had nothing but praise for Quesada. The chairman, General Omar Bradley, had been in daily contact with the energetic three-starrer when Quesada's Ninth Tactical Air Command was strafing and bombing Nazi defenses in support of the First Army push through France, and he rates Quesada one of the finest soldiers he has known.

Swift Delivery of Air Punch

As for the Army member of the Joint Chiefs, General J. Lawton Collins, Quesada had worked closely with him in the later stages of the European fighting. Collins, then head of the Seventh Corps, told his associates he seldom asked for an air punch on an enemy target that Quesada didn't supply with lightning speed.

Admiral Louis E. Denfeld, Chief of Naval Operations and Navy member of the Joint Chiefs at the time the Eniwetok assignment was made, had had little firsthand experience with Quesada, but enthusiastically approved a Navy-Air Force pilot-exchange program Quesada had helped work out after the war. As for the fourth member of the Joint Chiefs, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg of the Air Force, he had nominated Quesada in the first place.

Quesada is one of that fabulous group of diapered generals who shot up to stratospheric Air Force rank during World War II. Today, in his middle forties, he has lost little of the verve he had when he joined the air cadets 25 years ago. His face, when not deceptively dignified by horn-rimmed glasses, is a composite of all the eager young faces on the recruiting posters.

Quesada does all his own flying and has flown jets. Despite an unbroken string of successes during his military career, he is not overly impressed with his lofty station in life, and it was therefore not in his make-up to be overwhelmed by the Eniwetok assignment. But he was not likely to underrate the cosmic stakes involved.

Stateside headquarters for Task Force Three were set up in a corner of the sprawling old Navy Building on Constitution Avenue in Washington, across from the Atomic Energy Commission. With security the first problem to attend to, the Feebees—nickname for F.B.I. men in atomic circles—got busy screening all task force personnel. But a clean bill of health did not entitle a man to a three-dimensional view of the Eniwetok plans. A Geiger-counter operator, pilot, photographer, instrument technician or radar specialist was told no more than he needed to know. In many cases, an airman or sailor undergoing training was not even told what he was training for.

Quesada says he has had a terrible time remembering which of his subordinates were entitled to know what facts. Not an exceptionally taciturn man, he has often found himself staring into space if someone asked the wrong question. He has not even dared say, "I can't answer that," for fear his inflection might be a giveaway.

Blueprints for running the tests have had to be drawn up with machine-tool precision. Where would radiation-measuring and photo planes be circling the moment the bomb went off? What would be the H-hour spot for safety teams, rescue units and data-collection squads? How soon before the blast must danger areas be cleared of personnel?

What would be the best locations for boxcar loads of scientific equipment, test animals and countless military and civilian commodities whose fate under bomb impact the scientists would want to know?

In working out his plans, Quesada has had to fly countless hops around the country: to Los Alamos, where test bombs are made; to other atomic installations like Hanford and Oak Ridge; to the radio-logical safety school at Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay; to airfields, factories and assorted special laboratories. He has faced a seemingly endless problem of co-ordinating a million little wheels within wheels. By no means least, he has had to keep boning up on the intricacies of latest atomic developments.

"All I knew about nuclear energy when I got the Eniwetok assignment," he says, "was how to spell 'energy.' I had trouble with 'nuclear'." He admits he is better versed now, but still says the scientists floor him.

That is a large-size exaggeration that won't fool anyone who has ever worked with Quesada. The general has a restless, curious mind that loves to plumb each scientific innovation down to the elementary nuts, bolts, tubes and flywheels. He takes to a new device like a boy to a toy electric train.

F. Trubee Davison, whom Quesada piloted around when Davison was Assistant Secretary of War for Air, recently invited him to his South Carolina farm for a turkey shoot. They started out early one morning. But long before the hunt ended

As an Air Force captain, the author, Richard Witkin, flew 50 combat missions during World War II, and won three decorations. He covers the United Nations for the United Press

Quesada had spotted a brand-new tractor. Because he planned to buy a farm himself, he climbed in the seat and bounced around all day finding out what makes tractors run.

Quesada not only has a knack for understanding scientific developments, but is constantly figuring out ways to adapt them to his own needs. Take radar. Today a household word, radar was in knee pants when Quesada's fighter pilots, in support of Bradley's First Army offensive, were chopping up Nazi communications and blasting Nazi troops. Their tireless young chief seized every new radar device he could lay hands on. He worked out a whole textbook of new techniques for air-ground co-ordination, devised intricate radar systems for beating the weather and guiding his planes so they could hit top-priority targets through cloud formations, and used radar to steer crippled bombers home through gaps in enemy flak lines which First Army artillery blasted on cue.

Dr. L. A. DuBridge, president of California Institute of Technology and director of the development of radar devices in the European theater during World War II, calls General Quesada "one of the most imaginative of all high-ranking officers with whom we came in contact."

A Master of Co-ordination

If it were possible to get a look at "battle plans" for the Eniwetok operation, Quesada's flair for putting new equipment to unpredicted uses would doubtless be evident in a dozen places. It is a safe bet he has added refinements to standard systems for controlling the neatly timed movements of planes and ships in the critical seconds after the blast.

Like many another Washington functionary, Quesada has been besieged by a stream of perhaps well-meaning citizens with something to sell. A coat manufacturer proposed a method of impregnating clothes against radiation, and asked him to try it out at Eniwetok. An eyeglass manufacturer pushed a new-type goggle for combating the blinding flash of an H- or A-bomb blast. Quesada has listened to all such propositions with a wide-open mind, but it has taken up valuable time. "If we did all the

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things people want us to do," he says, "Eniwetok would sink."

Eniwetok Atoll is a circle of 40 low-lying islets in the Pacific about 5,000 miles west of San Francisco. The circle, 25 miles in diameter, has been converted into a single vast atomic proving ground. One of the largest islets, Eniwetok Island, is proving-ground headquarters.

As mayor-to-be of Eniwetok, Quesada has had a thousand problems the average town planner never dreamed about. Ordinarily, no one would pick for a community site a coral slither two miles long and so narrow that, as Quesada puts it, "I could drive a golf ball across it!" Yet that's all the real estate he was allotted to work with.

A contract was let with a West Coast firm to put up temporary living quarters, mess hall, bakery, laundry, firehouse and countless secret installations. It was like trying to find the one packing trick that would allow you to jam all the clothes and equipment you wanted into too small a suitcase.

The Eniwetok layout was figured with painful care, then revised and revised and revised. The firehouse was moved three times to isolate it as much as possible from traffic on the main artery. Living quarters for something under 10,000 men were rotated a few degrees to save precious space and take better advantage of prevailing winds for ventilation.

A less orderly mind than Quesada's would have blown a cylinder trying to manage the load of detail for which he was responsible. But Quesada has a talent for administration that has flabbergasted many a colleague. When the pressure begins to tell, he belittles his difficulties by recalling Lawrence of Arabia's phrase, "A flea on oneself is a gazelle." That usually calms him down.

Quesada is proud of the fact that before the Normandy landings in 1944, every piece of ground equipment for his fighter groups —trucks, jeeps, bomb haulers—was put through a test landing in England. Men who were with him then joke about the lengths to which he went to insure that Channel waters would not foul up the motors. Regulations called for waterproofing all vehicles to a height of four feet. When this requirement had been met in his command, Quesada decided to take out a little extra insurance and ordered the line raised to six feet. Then he personally picked out a creek for a "dry run" beachhead landing. This was a bit rough on jeep drivers, who found themselves floating about on the surface groping underwater with one hand to keep contact with their submerged chariots. Jeeps and drivers arrived safely.

Because Quesada's passion for perfection may impel him to carry his demands to exasperating lengths, some people don't like to work for him. Most do. Finding his enthusiasm contagious, they resist an occasional impulse to throw up their hands by kidding about the boss's ultrathorough methods. They have nicknamed him "General Q" because there is always a question what he is going to ask for next. Those who find the pace too demanding don't stay around very long. Quesada himself is the first to admit: "I'm hard on people who don't cut the mustard." But he never asks a subordinate to do anything he won't do himself.

Quesada's father was Spanish and his mother an Irish girl named Nellie McNamara. There are those who, having seen the general blow his top on occasion, are sure there is something inherently explosive in the Spanish-Irish amalgam. He is better known, however, for his uninhibited smile and a sense of humor that indicates he doesn't take himself too seriously.

Mother Had the Last Laugh

He likes to tell of the time his mother wrote him in England asking if there wasn't something she could send him. He said sure, how about a box of cigars, six pairs of silk stockings and six lipsticks. (Quesada was a bachelor then; later, just after the war, he married Kate Davis Pulitzer, daughter of the publisher of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.) When the package from his mother arrived, it contained a box of cigars, six pairs of men's silk hose and six sticks of camphor ice. He still has not decided whether she was pulling his leg.

As a boy, young Elwood was forever taking apart jalopies in the back yard or tinkering with crystal sets—when he wasn't playing football, basketball or baseball. He played all three at the University of Maryland. Today, only 10 pounds above his college weight of 170, he keeps in trim with a first-class tennis game and weekly rounds of golf in the high 70s.

In his school days, Quesada would stop whatever he was doing when a plane flew over and gawk till it was out of sight. So that when in 1924 an Air Corps officer showed up at college looking for football talent for the Air Corps flying school in San Antonio, Texas, Quesada was ripe for the picking.

Quesada impressed his instructors not only with his hot-rock flying ability but also with his engineering skill. Consequently, as his first assignment after graduation, he was made engineering officer at Washing-

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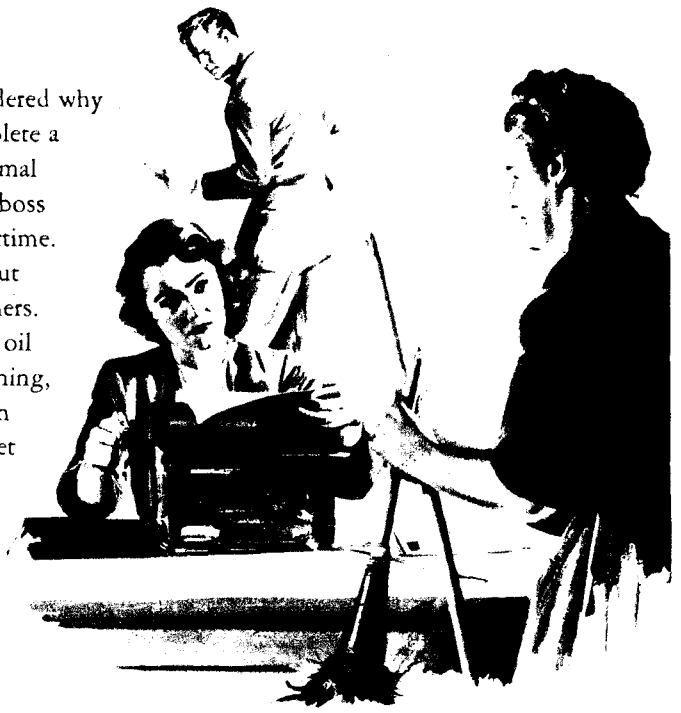

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ton's Bolling Field. This was the first in a series of usually logical, sometimes freakish events that catapulted him ahead.

At Bolling, Quesada always sought a chance to take up new types of planes. One day, he asked a young captain named Ira Eaker (destined to be deputy commanding general of the Air Force and Chief of Air Staff) if he could fly his late-model amphibian. Eaker told him to go ahead.

Not long afterward, the German plane Bremen was forced down in Labrador after making the first successful East-West flight across the Atlantic. Two amphibs were dispatched to the scene, one flown by Eaker, the other by a lieutenant who took as passenger the chief of the Air Corps, General James E. Fechet. In Newfoundland, the lieutenant became ill. At Eaker's suggestion, Fechet sent for Quesada. The Air Corps chief was so taken with him that he soon made him his aide.

From then on, Quesada always drew top-rung assignments that kept him in close contact with Air Corps headquarters. His friendship with Eaker paid off a second time. Eaker and Major Carl A. Spaatz, later Air Force Chief of Staff, had been given the go-ahead to attempt a world's endurance record in the trimotor airplane Question Mark. On Eaker's recommendation, Quesada was named as one of the two relief pilots. Newsmen ground out reams of copy as the plane, refueling in mid-air, shuttled back and forth in the skies over southern California. When an engine conked out and forced them down, the pilots had set a new mark of six days and seven hours aloft.

On the trip West to prepare for the flight, Quesada's fellow pilots glimpsed an unfamiliar side of his character. Eaker remembers: "We had stopped the first night in Atlanta. We were quartered together there in a large room and were going to bed. Quesada, who is a Catholic, got down on his knees beside the bed and said his prayers. It was apparently something he had done from childhood and he did not allow our presence to prevent him from showing his religious teaching and conviction. This impressed us all very much."

When war came, Quesada really came into his own. He showed himself a brilliant and inventive tactician in directing fighter sweeps in North Africa, Italy, France and Germany, and managed to slip away from his field desk often enough to fly 80 or 90 missions himself—he lost exact count somewhere along the line. But, ironically, his closest shave was in a jeep. He was driving up at the front and inadvertently slipped past the front lines.

Spotting a German tank, he said to his companion, Colonel Dyke Meyer, "Doesn't look like that one's knocked out." A moment later, an 88-millimeter shell tore the seat out from under him. The two crawled away to safety in a ditch, badly shaken but unhurt. It took them three hours to work back to their side of the lines through frequent sniper fire. The commanding officer of the 29th Division later sent Quesada the demolished jeep in a burlap envelope.

Letters with a Human Touch

Quesada spent hours writing to wives and parents telling them how proud they should be because their husbands or sons had just been decorated. He would dictate the letters to his aide and add a postscript in longhand, saying, "We like Joe too," or, "Sam is doing a fine job." His thoughtfulness was repaid many times over by the answers he received. Some sadly wrote their thanks even though the general's letter had been followed by a "missing in action" notice. Quesada saved a stack of letters. He and his wife often read them aloud in the evening in their well-appointed Massachusetts Avenue home in Washington.

Quesada was sold on the value of integrated, unified operations by his wartime contact with Bradley. The two men, one bubbling with energy, the other reserved and quietly brilliant, lived in two trucks backed up to each other. They developed great mutual respect and worked out a versatile air-ground attack that ripped through Nazi defenses.

Their prize project was dreamed up shortly before the historic Saint-Lô breakthrough. The immediate concern was to find ways of improving air-ground co-ordination for the big push about to be launched. As Bradley and Quesada batted the problem back and forth in a tent a few miles from the front, an idea took root. Why not put a pilot in the front tank of each tank column along with an airplane radio that would establish simple, direct tank-to-plane communication? The pilot-turned-tankman knew exactly what the plane upstairs could do. He could speak the jargon of the men in the cockpits. He would be able to direct the P-51s and P-47s to enemy strong points a lot more readily than a regular tankman.

Misadventures of a Tank

A slight comedy of errors ensued before the plan could be tried. Bradley ordered a tank sent immediately to headquarters of Quesada's Ninth Tactical Air Command in a near-by pasture so a plane radio could be installed. The ordnance depot which got the order, seeing no reason why a tank should be sent to the Air Force, thought the "Old Man" must mean the Ninth Division.

"When the tank did not arrive," Quesada recalls, "I squawked; Bradley raised hell. The tank promptly was reordered to my headquarters. When the tank arrived, my people wondered, 'What the hell do we need with a tank,' and sent it back. Again I squawked; again Bradley raised hell. A half hour later, the tank arrived again and I was at the road junction waiting for it."

A few days later came the Saint-Lô breakthrough, and the tank-plane combination worked beyond wildest hopes. It is today considered in military circles one of the classic examples of interservice teamwork developed during the war.

The Eniwetok assignment has given Quesada the chance to adapt his teamwork theory to an ultramodern operation. Task Force Three is organized as a model of unification. While the Bikini and 1948 Eniwetok tests also were joint operations and set important precedents, for the first time the merger of civilians of the AEC with military units is complete.

One of Quesada's top deputies is Dr. Alvin C. Graves of Los Alamos, a forty-year-old scientific genius for whom he has tremendous admiration and on whom he leans most heavily for advice. The whole Eniwetok high command is set up so that service lines crisscross with complete abandon. A Navy captain is in charge of all logistics—Army, Navy, Air Force and civilian. An Air Force colonel heads operations. So it is all the way across the board.

On the day set for detonation of the country's ninth nuclear bomb (following Alamogordo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, two at Bikini and three at Eniwetok), Quesada will be with his top scientific and military advisers in his Eniwetok operations shack.

As H hour approaches, messages from numberless key points will pour in over a labyrinthine communications net. Clerks will check off master lists as signals are received. A thousand "ready" flashes will have to be in before the final go-ahead for the blast may be given. Air Force planes roaring in from distant island airstrips will check in with code words meaning, "At rendezvous; on schedule." So will Navy carrier planes, and fleet units, and Army teams posted in the atoll region. All danger areas clear? Wind direction and cloud formations okay? Final checks made on batteries of scientific equipment? Any last-minute intelligence worries on security?

The task force high command may hold up the go-ahead until seconds before H hour. The final responsibility for a "yes" or "no" will be Quesada's. With perhaps only seconds to go, he will turn to Graves and his other deputies and say, "What do you think?" Then, if satisfied, he will flash the code word. And a moment in history, its meaning unpredictable, will be recorded. THE END

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Last of the Great Mail Robbers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Chapman jumped from the truck and lugged the four mail sacks to the back of the touring car, one by one. Then he appeared with an old flour sack. "This won't hurt," he said to Havernack. He pulled the sack over the driver's head and fastened it about his body. By the time Havernack got the sack back up over his head the touring car had roared away.

The criminals ditched the stolen car, transferred to one of Chapman's and drove leisurely to the hide-out on Long Island.

Rich Loot from Stolen Sacks

It was early the next afternoon before Chapman, Anderson and Loerber completed the inventory from the mail sacks. It broke down to: cash and small remittances, $27,200; bonds and notes, $1,136,000; stocks, $142,150; Liberty bonds, $33,400; U.S. Treasury certificates of indebtedness, $7,000; U.S. Treasury notes, $600. Total, $1,346,350.

From an intrinsic-value standpoint the crime was the second biggest in domestic criminal annals up to that time. Fifty-two years before, a young German immigrant named Schoenbein had, after more than a year of planning with confederates, opened the vaults of the Ocean Bank on Greenwich Street, not far from Leonard Street, and chalked up a score of $2,750,000 in cash and securities. It wasn't for another 29 years, until the Brink robbery in Boston, that the loot of a crime reached an aggregate comparable with the Leonard Street mail-truck heist.

The small amount of cash was disappointing to the criminals. The bulk of the loot was in nonnegotiable bonds. That would entail the services of someone to alter the serial numbers. Negotiable stocks and bonds and jewelry would bring not more than half of par value from underworld fences. One big difference between the Leonard Street and the Brink robberies was that the Boston mob got so much in cash.

Another big difference about the two jobs was that nobody saw anything funny in the Leonard Street holdup. People read about it in the papers and felt vaguely uneasy that such a thing could happen. The Boston job was something else again. After the initial excitement subsided, newspaper columnists began to print jokes about the robbery; radio and television comedians thought the idea of a mob of masked hoodlums sticking up an important business institution and getting away with more than $1,000,000 in cash was positively hilarious. A big insurance company took out a full-page newspaper ad to argue the point that such threats to life and property are not to be taken lightly. It just ain't funny, McGee.

There has seldom been such a concentration of detective talent on any one crime as there was on the Leonard Street mail robbery. Practically every sleuth in the Postal Inspection Service was assigned to the job. Scores of New York detectives raked the underworld and hustled suspects to headquarters. Postmaster General Will H. Hays hastened to New York to offer $5,000 reward for each of the three criminals. "I am going to stay here," Mr. Hays said, "until this crime is solved."

"He will," said Chapman, reading the statement, "have one hell of a long wait."

The trio at the Long Island hide-out followed the case in the newspapers. Their confederate, the platform man, wasn't mentioned. Havernack, the truck driver, had supplied descriptions of the eyes of two of the criminals and of the cheekbones of one of them. That was all the law had—that, and an empty, untraceable flour sack. The criminals returned to New York 96 hours after the robbery.

The long months of planning had been a strain on Chapman. He felt the urge to throw a big party. One of his favorite haunts was an Italian restaurant in Greenwich Village. He instructed the management to hold open house at his expense. Two police detectives, professional free-loaders, attended. They fell into conversation with the host. "You know," one of them confided, "we're really supposed to be out working on that mail robbery."

Chapman laughed. "The mail robbery," he said, "will probably stay hot longer than the food. Enjoy yourself."

Gerald Chapman was supporting several blondes around town. Christmas was less than two months off. He would need cash. The paper loot (bonds) from the mail truck was still hot enough to burn down the underworld fences. Chapman, Anderson and Loerber faded to upstate New York for Christmas money. They stuck up a jewelry store in Buffalo, blew a post-office safe in Binghamton, and robbed an American Express Company truck in Niagara Falls.

The American Express Company assigned a human ferret named Gordon McCarthy—an earthy man of middle age—to the Niagara Falls crime. McCarthy was fond of both food and sleep. He was to get little of either for many months.

A Sleuth's Three Straw Men

McCarthy learned that one of the Niagara Falls criminals wore thick-lensed glasses, that another had sunken eyes and high cheekbones, and that the third had bushy black eyebrows. In questioning witnesses to the Binghamton and Buffalo crime scenes he obtained similar descriptions. Detective McCarthy had begun to build three straw men.

Most of the loot in the crime in which McCarthy was interested had been American Express traveler's checks. The checks began turning up in Milwaukee, Indianapolis and Cleveland. In those cities McCarthy added certain features to his straw men. The man with the sunken eyes and high cheekbones was faultlessly tailored. The man with the bushy black brows had a prominent chin. The one with the thick glasses had a soft voice.

In January, 1922, three months after the mail-truck robbery, an undignified howl went up from the staid financial precincts of Philadelphia. The loan department of

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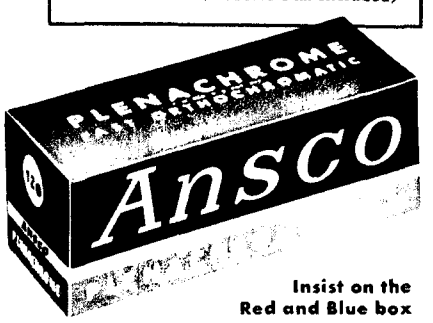

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SIROIL AT ALL DRUG STORES
Siroil Laboratories, Inc., Santa Monica, California

a Quaker City bank discovered, among its supposedly platinum-plated collateral, a third of a million dollars of the mail-truck securities. Serial numbers had been skillfully altered. More than a quarter of a million dollars in cash had been raised on the "hot paper" by mysterious dealers who kept themselves several times removed from the end transaction.

In New York, Uncle Sam set up a false brokerage office on lower Broadway; Postal Inspector Joseph J. Doran, a quiet, conservative man, was placed in charge. Overnight Doran became a loud, shifty, overdressed blue-sky operator, hoping, as such, to attract some of the hot paper.

The traveler's checks from the Niagara Falls robbery began to show in New York. McCarthy hit town in a hurry. He was right on the job one day when a Fifth Avenue department store detained a man who proffered one of the checks—a $5 one. The man was an old, beat-up Jack-of-all-crimes. He said the check had been given to him by a man he knew only as Charles Brown. Brown wore thick-lensed glasses and had a soft voice. The old criminal had met him in an underworld dive. McCarthy drifted into the dive wearing protective coloration; he was a fugitive hot-paper dealer from Chicago. He soon spotted Brown, then cultivated him.

Brown was all ears when McCarthy told him what line he was in. He felt out McCarthy about handling some really incandescent paper. Nothing was too hot for McCarthy. Brown said he would have something to show him. McCarthy, expecting the traveler's checks, was disappointed when Brown produced some bonds. He expressed interest, nevertheless, and noted the serial numbers. "I'll see what I can do," he said.

McCarthy checked the serial numbers. The bonds were part of the mail-truck loot—and the man with the thick-lensed glasses fitted the mail-truck driver's description of one of the robbers.

Inspector Doran's fake brokerage office, ineffectual thus far, now fitted nicely into the counterplot. When Brown asked McCarthy where he disposed of hot bonds, McCarthy was able to point to the spurious front.

A man with bushy black eyebrows and a prominent chin walked into the front and questioned Doran. Was it true that Doran handled all kinds of hot paper? It was.

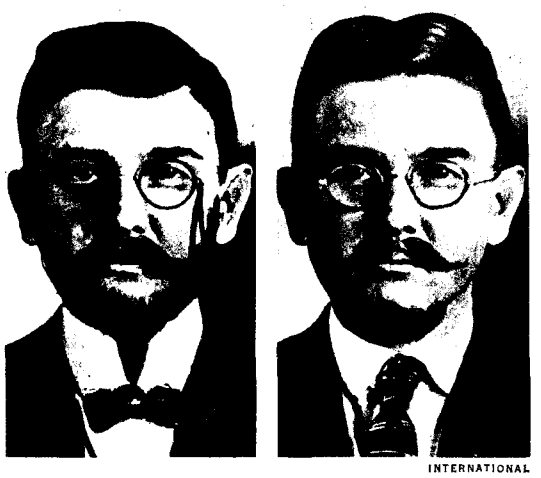
Cops and Robbers in Subways

The law now had two suspects in its sights—the man with the thick glasses and the man with the bushy brows. Both men were difficult to tail. They would change subway trains two or three times in a short, direct journey. Shadowing detectives, rather than uncover themselves, dropped them. The law was playing for triple or nothing; it wanted to get all three mail robbers in its sights before closing in.

Strategy called for a disagreement to develop over the price the shady broker was willing to pay for the securities. "He knows where the stuff comes from," McCarthy, the go-between, told Brown. "He insists on dealing with all three of you. Let's have a conference somewhere."

A conference was set for the corner of Amsterdam Avenue and 102d Street at nine o'clock the steaming night of July 3d—more than eight months after the mail robbery. As nine o'clock approached, the neighborhood came alive with postal and city sleuths disguised as loungers, stoop-sitters and cigar-store clerks. A black touring car pulled up. Gerald Chapman, Dutch Anderson and Charlie Loerber found themselves under a mountain of brawn before they could draw their guns.

Next day, the Fourth of July, Chapman, being questioned in a fourth-floor room of the Main Post Office, dived through a window. He landed on a wide ledge, ducked in another window and vanished. A cordon of police surrounded the building, then combed it. Chapman was found hiding under a desk. The window dive intrigued the public. From then on, whatever Gerald Chapman did was news.



INTERNATIONAL

Dutch Anderson in two disguises. He was shot to death in Muskegon, Michigan

Loerber "sang," disclosing every detail of the plot. The Gramercy Park apartment and the Long Island hide-out yielded $500,000 in bonds; the balance of the loot was never recovered. Loerber got off with five years for testifying against Chapman and Anderson. The platform man, who had received a few thousand dollars in dribs and drabs, went over to Uncle Sam's side again and was eventually released.

Chapman and Anderson, silent and scornful, were each sentenced in August, 1922, to a quarter of a century in the federal prison at Atlanta. A $5 express check from a minor crime had canceled out their million-and-a-half haul.

Chapman escaped from the big cage in Georgia one night in March, 1923, by short-circuiting a power line and going over the wall in the darkness. Anderson tunneled his way out a few months later.

One Sunday morning in October, 1924—three years after the robbery—a policeman in New Britain, Connecticut, was killed when he interrupted a safeblower in a department store. The murderer ran through the streets to freedom but his lookout man was nabbed. The lookout identified the killer as Gerald Chapman. So did a policeman who had witnessed the murder, and five citizens who had closely observed the fleeing man.

Chapman was arrested in Muncie, Indiana, three months later. A revolver that he was carrying was proved by ballistics tests to be the Connecticut murder weapon.

While Connecticut prepared its case against Chapman the bandit was started back to Atlanta. In Georgia, railroad workers discovered dynamite on the tracks Chapman's train was to pass over. Dutch Anderson, still at liberty, was busy on behalf of his pal.

Assistant U.S. Attorney General William "Wild Bill" Donovan set the wheels in motion for Chapman's transfer from Atlanta to Connecticut, and the New York Evening Graphic, one of the then new tabloids, attacked the credibility of certain witnesses against Chapman. Fist fights broke out on the streets over Chapman's guilt or innocence; theater audiences took sides when his picture appeared in newsreels. But a jury needed only one ballot to convict Chapman without a recommendation for mercy.

The State Supreme Court of Errors ruled, unanimously, that seldom had a charge of murder been so clearly and conclusively proved.

Pardoned for Mail Theft

From his cell in Wethersfield Prison, Chapman claimed he could not be hanged until he had first served out his time in Atlanta. President Calvin Coolidge pardoned him for the mail-truck robbery.

"The pardon is unconstitutional," Gerald Chapman insisted defiantly. "I refuse to accept it."

An Indiana farmer named Ben Hance, who had been a witness against Chapman at the murder trial, was murdered, along with his wife, by Dutch Anderson. Two months later Anderson was killed in a gun duel at Muskegon, Michigan, after fatally wounding a detective.

Connecticut installed a new hanging machine which jerked a condemned man upward instead of dropping him through a trap.

A few minutes after midnight on April 5, 1926, the last of the great mail robbers—the man who came to the minds of veteran detectives when the Brink crime was perpetrated last January—went to his death.

* * *

The slender new rope, as delicately yellow as a fair woman's tresses, hissed like a serpent, snapped taut and jerked its black-hooded burden ceilingward . . . So abrupt was the jerk that it seemed the head in its sable cowl either would be sundered from the body, or the rope must give way . . . Gerald Chapman underwent many convulsions while dying, and his felt-slippered feet quivered so rapidly that they seemed to be the wings of butterflies.

—FOWLER

COLLIER'S "Okay, let 'em in!" JERRY MARCUS

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Fadeout

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

with Gould. He ignored Gould's calls, refused to see him, tried to argue him into settling for a fraction of the amount accumulating under the contract, and made legal efforts to set the agreement aside on the grounds that it had been signed under duress. But Gould, one of the sharpest ever honed, had taken care to word his contract in such a way that it was airtight, and when Gould sued Mike to bring the payments up to date, Mike reluctantly settled out of court.

But it would be a mistake to conclude from this that Mike was devoid of business ethics. He could be impeccably reliable when dealing with the strata to which he still looked up. Ed Barrow, boss of the Yankee Stadium, for instance, will tell you that in his rental dealing, Mike's word was so dependable that they could actually dispense with a contract. Executives of the network broadcasting his fights had the same happy experience.

Accused of Favoring Mobs

One attack that never failed to set up storm warnings in the offices of the Twentieth Century Sporting Club was the allegation that Mike played ball with the mobs and gave their fighters an inside track to Garden bouts and Garden victories. As with so many other phases of Mike's career, there's evidence on both sides.

Once when a mob-controlled champion was going to meet an "independent" challenger, talk around town had the mob buying off the referee and one of the judges. The challenger's manager received an anonymous letter warning him of the impending steal. The manager then showed this letter to Uncle Mike. Mike went straight to the boxing commission and, with oratory that was eloquently loud if monosyllabic, demanded that the untainted young challenger be given full protection against the sordid influence of "them thieves." The commission and, in turn, the referee and judges were impressed. The title changed hands on a hairbreadth decision, breaking the underworld's hold on a crown that had been its personal property for years.

On the other hand, muscle man Frankie Carbo's performers were frequently booked on Garden cards and Mike's relations with the mob were usually cordial. A pragmatist with no set code of ethics, Mike would neither encourage nor squeeze out the racketeers. As a showman, though, he knew how fixed fights could sour the fans and it seems obvious, from his record, that his influence, when necessary, was on the side of legitimate contests.

"One of the most amazing things about Mike was the way he acted in adversity," said Harry Markson, Jacobs' publicity chief and the Garden's current Director of Boxing. A literate, quiet-mannered college graduate, who looks like a radio writer or an English instructor who somehow wandered into the ring game by mistake, Markson observed: "When things were going great, when he had a sellout, he'd be in a terrible temper. But every time he suffered a big setback, he'd fool everybody by being so pleasant you'd hardly recognize him.

"Like the day of the first Louis-Buddy Baer fight. We only had the Washington ball park for this one night and if we were rained out we'd be sunk. That afternoon it starts to shower and by evening it's a regular storm. Everybody but Mike is going crazy. He's the only one who doesn't even mention the weather. Instead he starts telling us funny stories about the old days when he was running excursion boats to Coney Island. The rain cut our gate at least by half. But coming out after the fight, Mike still didn't say a word about it. To make it worse, it was still drizzling and there wasn't a cab in sight. There we were, standing in the rain with nothing to think about but our hard luck. 'Tough night, boss, looks like you got the elements against you,' someone said. Mike just shrugged. 'Aaaah, what's the difference? I been battlin' the elements all m'life.' "

Why a man who has made the pursuit of the buck a personal crusade for half a century should laugh off his losses and, on the other hand, fly into his worst rages on hi biggest pay nights is another of the many contradictions in the Mike Jacobs story. Meanwhile, Markson has a ready explanation. Like all champions, Mike knew intuitively when to dig in and when to lay back. He'd come up through a tough school and he'd had to learn how to roll with the punches in order to live and fight another day. And from his excursion-boat days, he knew the weatherman was one fellow who *couldn't* be influenced.

During the war Mike's unpopularity, as well as his fortune, increased when he insisted on boosting ringside prices to $20 and $30. He knew the money was around, even if most of the boxers who rated that kind of admission price were doing their fighting with rifles. This annoyed some of the boxing writers who held to the notion that monopoly involves a sense of social responsibility. But it was the proposed Louis-Conn Army Relief show that had sports fans ready to turn on Mike.

Louis and Conn were ready to fight for the title with all receipts going to Army Emergency Relief when Secretary of War Stimson canceled the match because "this promotion would not be in the best interest of the War Department." Inevitably, Mike became the scapegoat.

According to veteran sports authority John Kieran, what really happened was this: A general representing the War Department came up with the idea of staging an Army Relief bout between G.I.s Louis and Conn. With War Department approval, Grantland Rice and Kieran himself asked Mike Jacobs to promote the fight without compensation.

It was at a press conference set up to launch the publicity campaign for the fight, ironically, that Grantland Rice first heard of the alleged arrangement by which Louis and Conn were to repay personal advances from Mike totaling $135,000 out of the gross receipts. Grantland Rice resigned, and John Kieran inherited this hot potato.

Louis Was Taking a Big Risk

According to Joe Louis, a War Department spokesman had told him also he could receive an additional sum to pay off his back taxes if he put his title on the line. Kieran, who somehow managed to keep his head in the cross fire of charge and countercharges, tried to remind everyone of the goal—$1,000,000 for Army Relief, a sum that could not readily be raised at a single stroke in any other way. After all, Louis was being asked to risk the one asset with which he could surely clear up his debt to the government after the war. And since the money from Mike had been advanced against a rematch with Conn, it wasn't exactly scandalous that Joe should want to write it off so he could come out of the Army in the clear.

When Louis held to his original understanding of the terms, a major general threatened to send him overseas into the front lines.

Louis looked at him impassively. "General, I'm in the Army. I'm ready to go anywhere anybody else in this Army goes."

Meanwhile, in the course of a routine press conference with Secretary Stimson, a Washington correspondent, looking for something to spice his story, had asked, "What about the $100,000 Mike Jacobs is getting out of this Louis-Conn fight?"

This was a bombshell to the Secretary, who knew nothing of the arrangements made by representatives of his department. He made his decision. Kieran was sum-

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moned to the Pentagon and told the fight was off. Kieran tried to give Mr. Stimson a firsthand report that had Jacobs completely in the clear. But the Secretary of War refused to reconsider. Perhaps Mike had played wolf so often that even when he honestly wanted to help the flock, the shepherds—from force of habit—shuddered at his presence.

Jacobs & Louis, in Dun & Bradstreet terms, was a multimillion-dollar combine that would be out of business the first time any challenger succeeded in putting Joe down for the count of ten. Thus the champion—and indirectly Mike—made a contribution not to be passed over lightly when the title was twice put on the line in 1942 with all receipts going to Navy and Army Relief. It was Walter Winchell who asked Mike if he would promote a benefit show for the Navy. Mike asked, "How much money d'they want?"

Only $25,000, he was told.

"Hell," Mike sneered, "that kind of money ain't worth my time. I'll get 'em $75,000." He did, by presenting the first heavyweight championship bout ever fought for charity.

As soon as the war ended, Uncle Mike went to work on the second Louis-Conn production he had been nursing all those years. His first edict was that neither man should engage in the usual tune-up bouts, even though both were obviously rusty after four years of inactivity. But, of course, it was this very lack of condition that Mike was most anxious to hide.

Next, he manipulated the appearance of a claque of old champions, managers and assorted experts at both training camps. Their ostensibly objective reports described the sluggishness of the champion and the splendid condition and undiminished skill of the challenger who had come so close to whipping Louis in their first fight.

Discerning sports writers nailed this for the empty come-on it was, but Uncle Mike had mastered the high-pressure art of repeating a fiction till it passes for fact. Under his bombardment, the odds began to shrink and fight fans began to seethe with the old fever that grips them when they think they smell blood and the promise of a new champion.

The first Louis-Conn had been scaled from a $25 top and it was believed that Mike would raise the price of ringside seats to $40 or $50. One afternoon a sports writer, Stanley Frank, asked Mike what price he had finally decided on. Mike, always keenly aware of the value of trial balloons, said he hadn't made up his mind yet, and added, apparently as a laughing afterthought, "Hell, I might even charge $100. Who knows?"

Frank reported the $100 figure and shortly after, to the amazement of Mike's staff, requests for tickets, backed up by checks as large as $1,000 and $2,000, began pouring in. That, of course, fixed the price.

Those $100 tickets—10,000 of them—brought in $1,000,000 alone, a record of its kind. Mike's personal contribution to inflation hardly made him an object of affection among boxing fans, but the second Louis-Conn go was the greatest attraction since Dempsey-Tunney and every real follower of the game had to be on hand.

The fight itself turned out to be an odoriferous anticlimax, for here was a slower and clearly less effective champion while the intervening years had left the challenger with nothing but a wooden and overcautious style that made a mockery of Mike's overexuberant price scale.

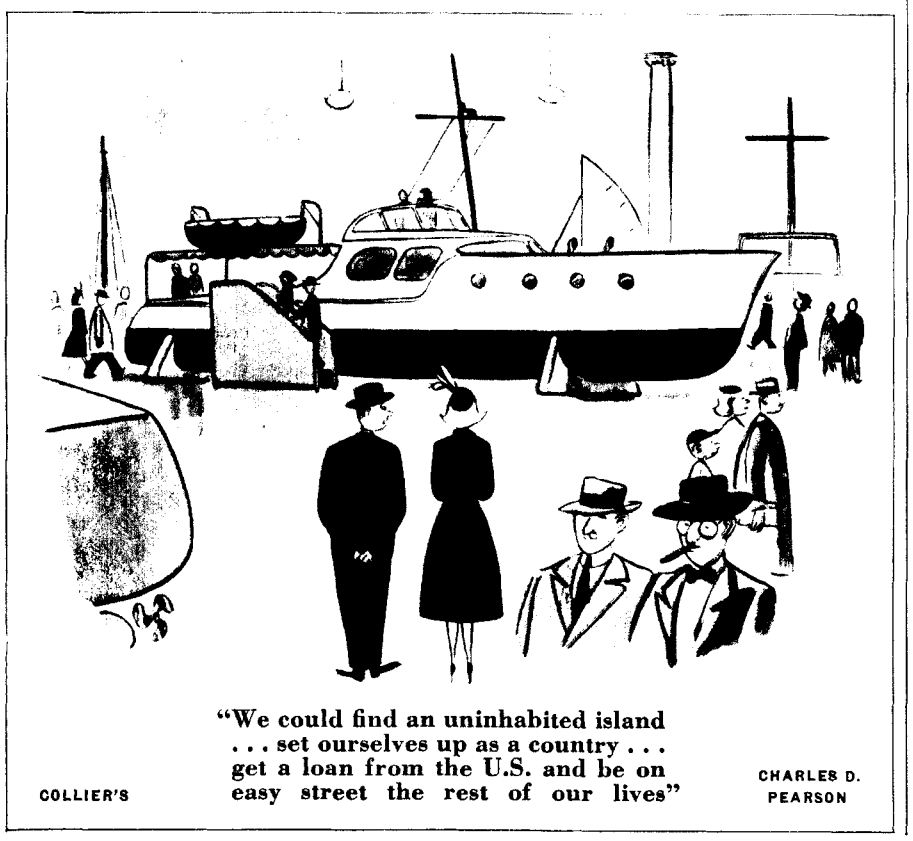
Benched by Heart Attack

A heart attack at the age of sixty-seven benched Mike temporarily, but it was impossible for him to stay away from his office. "What ya want me to do, Doc, stay down in the country and spend the rest of my life listenin' to my heart?" he had protested. Mike dropped by the office when Harry Markson and his counsel, Sol Strauss, were pegging the price for the first Louis-Walcott fight at $25.

"Thirty," Mike growled.

With Mike's $30 top, the Louis-Walcott gate set a Garden record. Louis was fading fast and Mike knew the fans would pay to see him closing out his career, no matter whom he fought. As it turned out—though not even Mike could be credited with that much forethought—the aged Walcott who wasn't expected to last a round knocked Louis down twice and came within a sentimental hair of scoring the greatest upset in the history of the title. It was like a farewell present from the boxing business to the faltering Uncle Mike, the perfect build-up for the rematch and his final big-money gate.

Despite doctors' warnings that he must slow down, Mike was back working at his usual pace. In the days before the middleweight match between Marcel Cerdan and Georgie Abrams, scheduled for December, 1946, he frequently dropped in to see Doc Crozier, his bonesetter friend. "He'd sneak in a side door into a small private office as if he were trying to get away from people," Doc reported. "He said he could relax with me. He'd talk about the old days, investments, a million different things



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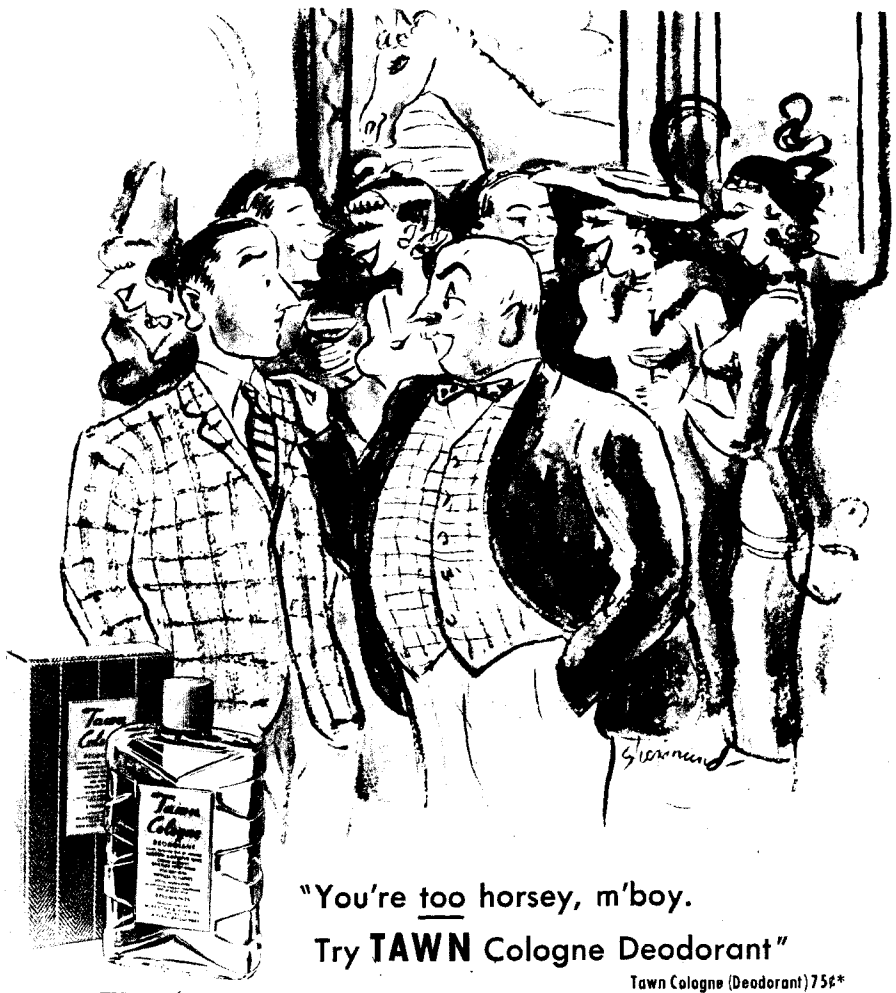

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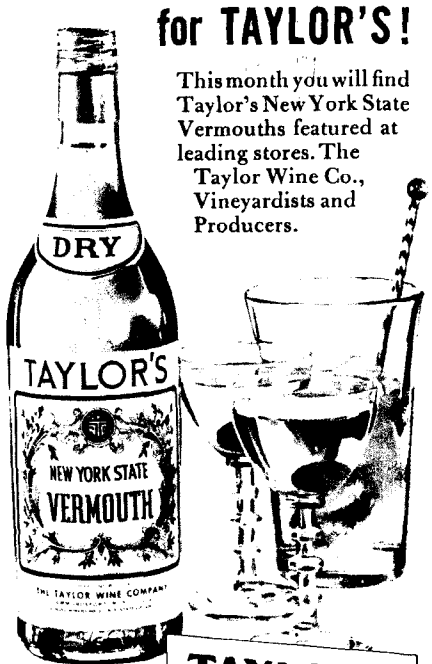

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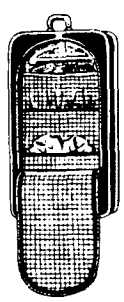

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—but he'd get grouchy and shut up if you switched to boxing. Or if any of the fight crowd happened to come in."

Three days before the fight, Mike was feeling particularly expansive. He had just cleaned up a small fortune in a New Jersey real-estate deal. Tickets for the Cerdan-Abrams bout were moving nicely. The day after the fight, he was leaving for Florida. "There's plenty money to be made these days," Mike was saying. "Tell you what, Eddie. I'll give you some stocks. Buy what I tell you and you'll make a bundle."

Crozier noticed, as Mike was talking, that he had begun to stammer. The words seemed to catch in his throat. "Plenny money," he repeated, then he half rose and started to remove his shirt. "Think I need a little rub, Eddie. Feel kinda worn out."

Then he collapsed over the chair.

Beating a Grim Superstition

Mike lay in a coma for several days. That was the mournful period in '46 when Jimmy Walker and Jimmy Johnston had just passed on. Superstitious Jacobs Beach was convinced that Mike would complete the fatal trinity. But Mike came through against the odds.

Along Jacobs Beach, the fight mob that had lived in his shadow for years laughed off his amazing recovery: "Mike's just too stubborn to die," they said. But from that point on, Mike's control over the fight game began to slip. His own illness and the fact that, after his stroke, he had to delegate responsibility to others, plus Joe Louis' retirement—all these things convinced him that he had come to the end of the road. A new syndicate, the International Boxing Club, bought Mike out and moved into the Garden.

With Mike's passing from the boxing scene some managers looked forward to an easing of the monopoly he had fashioned so shrewdly. But the new syndicate lodged in the Garden quickly became notorious among the boxing writers as "Octopus, Inc." —and other equally descriptive nicknames. Today the talk around the Managers' Guild too, is that, no matter how hard or conniving Mike may have been, "you could always make a buck with Mike. But this new outfit is strictly we-want-it-all."

So Mike, quietly retired on his New Jersey estate, can enjoy the rare privilege of watching his critics confess, in effect, that "Uncle Mike wasn't so bad after all."

But the Jacobs fortune might have been left without heir or heiress, if it hadn't been for an unexpected turn of events a few years earlier. At their winter home in Florida one afternoon, Josie was visited by a manager's wife who was trying to adopt a baby. Impatient with the red tape, she was about to quit on the idea when Josie said, in her rough, impulsive, good-natured way, "You wan' a baby, I'll get ya a baby," and although adoption was a little out of her line, she exerted her usual resourcefulness. When the baby arrived, it was, the two women agreed, unattractive, scrawny and sickly looking. Josie's friend said it wouldn't do, and Josie waved it away.

The image of this tiny, unwanted infant seemed to haunt Josie. She'd pick up the phone every now and then and ask, "You still got that homely little so-and-so?" Each time she heard that no one seemed to want this puny little foundling, she'd be more disconcerted. One afternoon when Josie and her friend were feeling particularly sentimental, she called about the infant once more. Suddenly she said, "So nobody wants the homely little son of a gun? Bring it here. I'll take it m'self."

The fairy tale of the ugly duckling has nothing on Josie and Mike, for Joan has grown into a bright and attractive six-year-old on whom Mike seems to lavish all the affection he's been saving up in the 70-year war of attrition he's been waging against his fellow man.

Our last visit to the big country house at Rumson offered an unforgettable contrast to the seething activity of Mike's prime. He was sitting in an easy chair, pathetically enfeebled, barely able to raise his left hand in greeting. Everyone had told us what a lonely man Mike was these days. The essential friendlessness of his life was weighing on him at last. Now that the boxing game was struggling along without him, almost no one came to see him. He had been a single-O guy all his life, but a busy one. Now there was nothing for him to do but sit there and stew and listen to his own heart.

Little Joan came over with two doll dresses Josie and her aunt had made for a children's party the following day. A prize was to be given for the best dress, she explained. The warm paternal smile that came over Mike's face looked remarkably inappropriate on this hard old man.

"You think you'll win?" she was asked.

"Sure, I'll win easy," Joan said. Mike grinned at her proudly.

Watching her go skipping off with her dolls, we suddenly felt overwhelmed by the thought that all the scrapping, the hustling, the conniving, the blood and sweat that go with control of America's most brutal business winds up in a multimillion-dollar fortune to be inherited by a little girl who arrived from nowhere one afternoon and

"Now you got to walk from here, Mac. I ain't allowed to drive this thing through the halls"
COLLIER'S VINCE FALETTI

was allowed to stay. As fairy godfather and godmother, Mike and Josie are right out of Damon Runyon at his best.

A little while later we were standing in the kitchen with Josie who was reaching way back for adoring stories of her own father, a traveling actor who had fought with Napoleon III.

Suddenly Mike lurched through the door in a black temper. His strength had returned surprisingly. "Don' blab everything you know!" he shouted. "You'll help 'em knock my brains out!"

"But I was only talkin' about my old man . . ." Josie protested.

"Shut up, I said!" Mike shouted and, miraculously, he pounded the table with the hand that had seemed useless an hour before.

When he stormed out, Josie said, "It ain't his fault. He just don' know what to do with himself now that he ain't workin'."

We thought of Mike as a kid on the water front battling for survival. There the golden rule was twisted out of shape to read: Do it to him before he does it to you. In his great mansion on Millionaires' Row with his servants and his fleet of fine cars, he was still battling for survival in the only way he had ever learned: by striking out at everything he couldn't control.

Josie walked us to the door. "Mike's gotta have action," she said. "Without action, he's nothin'. But whatever you write, you gotta put this in. He was the best damn' promoter there ever was, or ever will be. After him, they threw away the combination."

THE END

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Somebody Always Going Away

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

him included the Boston Y.W.C.A., which set up a service for transient women in 1866; two Brooklyn Quakers who, when the first Travelers Aid Society opened in London in 1885, were so impressed by its work that they raised funds for a similar service in New York; the Council of Jewish Women, which began meeting immigrants on the New York piers in 1890; the deaconesses of the Methodist Church in Pittsburgh; the Florence Crittenton Home of Mercy in Lexington, Kentucky; and Y.W.C.A.s, Bible classes and women's missionary societies all over the country which set up travelers' aid bureaus in their own communities.

At a convention in New York in 1917, the local groups confederated themselves into a national association and began work on a comprehensive directory. Several years later they adopted the now-famous emblem —a large white lamp in the shape of a globe, with two red-and-blue hemispheres linked by the words "Travelers Aid."

Service for All Who Need It

It is safe to say that none of the early participants in this prodigious enterprise foresaw anything like the bathless old gentleman from upstate New York. He is neither young nor female, and, except for his pronounced antipathy for soap and water, he is in no grievous trouble. But when he leans upon Travelers Aid, his elbow has as much right to be there as anybody else's.

There are minor dissimilarities between the elderly hydrophobe and the other clients. His problem is relatively simple, and he knows exactly what it is. He also knows that Travelers Aid is there and why, and thus saves himself a lot of time and anguish.

The average traveler in trouble, if he is aware of Travelers Aid at all, visualizes it in the person of a kindly old lady, placed in the depot (by the government, the railroad, or possibly a local church) to tell people where to find the drinking fountain, or a clean and inexpensive furnished room. He finds out instead that she is actually a person of considerable energy and intelligence, carefully selected for her job because her education and temperament qualify her to cope with just such unforeseen difficulties as the one that faces him now.

The typical Travelers Aid lady is most often a local girl, directed and financed by a local organization, the community's own Travelers Aid Society. Its connection with societies in other localities consists of using the same printed directory, the distinctive lamp used by them all, and a common membership in an "intercity chain of service."

The Travelers Aid worker's desk and office in the terminal are provided free by the railroad itself, which is more than happy to have her there. She herself, if she is one of the younger Travelers Aid people, holds a master's degree in social work. She has been taught to remember two things above all else: (1) every person who comes to her for help is a human being, proud and individual; and (2) his problem is one that might face anyone—he is a traveler and he needs her aid.

At first glance, it might seem arbitrary to lump together all moving people as a special group with special needs. They represent every social, cultural and economic level, and their needs range from a cup of coffee to a course of psychiatric treatment. And yet the one simple fact that they are on the move makes them a group apart, with a common identity.

Travel itself is a thing that often makes a normally self-sufficient person completely helpless. The traveler is in a state of suspension. For the moment, he is neither here nor there. The physical effort of the trip itself, especially if he is older, may exhaust and befuddle him. At the very time when he is least equipped to cope with it, an emergency rises: sudden illness, the loss of a ticket, or any of a hundred other things, real or imagined.

Often the problem is not caused by the travel; the travel is caused by the problem. Sometimes a trip, perhaps a foolish one, is being made to escape an intolerable situation.

In any event there is a crisis, and it is the function of the lady in the railroad station (or bus terminal, or airport or pier) to discover and cope with it.

This calls for intuition, quick action, ingenuity and common sense—and, in many cases, for a degree of prying and audacity that only the urgency of a situation could justify.

The Travelers Aid information desk is a vital asset to the work. One worker estimates that nine tenths of the people who are helped bump into Travelers Aid accidentally: they come with a small side problem and stay to leave the larger one.

Says one case worker: "You sit here and tell three dozen people in a row how to get where they're going. When the thirty-seventh person comes up, something clicks in your head. How? Well, when a young girl comes up with no baggage and wants to find a room, that's at least a clue, isn't it?"

As an example of most of the factors involved in the work, there was an incident in one of the societies last year that involved a teen-age boy going from, say Jonesville to Brownsville on a bus. He had asked the driver to wake him at Brownsville, but the driver forgot about him until the bus had reached Smithville.

The boy went to the Travelers Aid desk in the Smithville bus terminal and asked for help in getting back to Brownsville. It seemed merely a question of getting a ticket from the bus company, which was liable for the boy's predicament. But larger factors were apparent to the Travelers Aid lady. She talked with the boy, and he told her he had left home to join a friend in Brownsville who had promised to get a job for him there.

The worker put in telephone calls to Jonesville and Brownsville: not to the boy's family nor to his friend, but to the Travelers Aid societies in both places, which began quick and quiet investigations. In Jonesville they found that the boy had been a brilliant high-school student, working toward a scholarship in a large technological college, and that he had left because his father was abusive and his home life intolerable. In Brownsville they found that there was no reasonable prospect of his finding a job.

With the boy's consent, a chain of events was set off that ended in his returning to school and being placed with his father's blessing, in a foster home where he now seems to be well adjusted.

In the "Weaker Sex" Era

Old hands in Travelers Aid today ruefully admit that their organization has not always held its present place in public esteem. At one time some of its workers were referred to as Lemon Aids, and were regarded by some segments of the populace as sort of self-appointed policewomen. This was 30 or more years ago, when women were still widely believed to be the weaker sex and when, apparently, more than one Travelers Aid lady felt that it was up to her to protect women-on-the-move whether they wanted protection or not.

It is hard to find grimness or militancy in the average Travelers Aid worker of today. She is neither hawk-faced policewoman nor determined do-gooder, but a capable, energetic and pleasant woman, with a genuine liking for people and for the organization whose arm band she wears.

This attitude accounts for her sitting all day in a railroad terminal, answering the same trifling questions over and over again;

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or being dragged out of bed at all hours of the night; or, in coastal cities, standing all morning on the mercilessly cold floor of a pier. It is a job with guts in it.

There is a case supervisor in one Eastern city who, when she can, likes to browse through the detailed records kept by one of her predecessors in 1916: "Directed 2 ladies to waiting room . . . Gave a paper cup to lady who wanted to take a tablet . . . Showed Hindu lady where to take the Elm Street car . . . Aided in caring for 8 fainting women . . . Answered a woman where to get a room for she and her husband . . . Woman from Littletown found locked in toilet, drunk and very sick. Took her in taxi to the Home for Friendless Women."

Duties Are Now More Complex

The woman who kept the records and the one who saves them now are basically the same. They hold the same job in the same society, and the very desk at which one of them sits now is the desk to which the Hindu lady came in quest of the Elm Street car. But, where one worker was occupied with paper cups and the care of fainting women, her successor has more on her mind. Her morning's work might include seeing a group of 80 displaced persons through a change of trains, keeping a soldier from being marked A.W.O.L. a thousand miles away, and writing a report that will become part of a national statistical study which will receive the attention of the White House and the legislatures of three Western states.

This broadening out of Travelers Aid work dates back to 1917, when the national headquarters was set up in New York. The member groups are still independent, still locally supported and controlled, but they now form an effective network, ready and able to take on any assignment.

The national association, operating on a budget of $166,000 a year and employing a staff of 28, maintains a working contact between the locals and with co-operating agencies here and abroad, mass-produces the forms and literature needed in the work, compiles studies on trends and legislation affecting travelers' aid, and, in general, serves as a clearinghouse and nerve center.

It also serves as a sort of inspector general, holding the locals to certain standards. Each local must be directed by a board of representative and interested members of the community. It must employ a full-time qualified executive "with demonstrated ability" who is a member of or eligible to be a member of the American Association of Social Workers. It must live up to the general standards of social case work. It must keep individual case records, submit annual statistical reports on its work to national headquarters and have its expenditures annually audited.

The local's services must be not only up to par, but also easily accessible to its fellow societies and its clients at all times. On occasion, a member society not living up to its requirements has been dropped from membership in the national association.

The national association's statistical studies are used constantly in campaigns for state laws to better the condition of needy people, especially minors and the mentally ill, who do not meet the "residence" requirements for relief. On occasion it has provided money for local societies in emergency: once when the Miami local was destroyed by a hurricane, and again when the New York society was on the verge of dropping its vital DP work at the ports because the financial burden was more than it could carry.

It maintains contacts in the United States with 928 "co-operating representatives": Red Cross chapters, family service agencies, welfare departments, district doctors and public health nurses, and some 50 private individuals who volunteer their services and expenses to help with the work. It is in steady contact with the Travelers Aid societies in Australia and Great Britain, the Maatschappelijk Advies en Inlichtingenbureau (Association for Advice and Information) in Holland, and such people as Mrs. Irma Mansilla, a former Miami Travelers Aid worker who moved to Peru with her engineer husband and now acts as a one-woman Travelers Aid society in Lima.

Because of this impressive co-ordination, an invalid or a small child can travel almost anywhere in the U.S.A. and be in safe hands all the way. A DP from a camp in Germany, stepping ashore in Boston, can be met by a Travelers Aid worker who knows him by name, knows where he is going, has his ticket ready for him, and has made all the necessary arrangements to safe-hand him from the dock to the home of his sponsor, 12 miles outside of Wichita. Conversely, an aged Swiss lady returning home can be conducted from the home of her friends in Shreveport to the information desk of the Freundinnen Junger Mädchen (Friends of Young Women) in the railroad station at Bern.

Of the local Travelers Aid groups, those in the larger cities handle as many as 32,000 cases a year. Of the smallest societies, a typical one is in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, where a single volunteer, Mrs. Emilie F. P. Wilson, out of the goodness of her heart and the corner of her purse, for 27 years took care of an average of 10 travelers a year. She paid her own expenses (except that she could reverse the charges on telegrams and telephone calls); she could be counted on to meet people at four o'clock in the morning if necessary; and she never ducked a problem by bucking it on to the larger local in Philadelphia.

A representative Travelers Aid group is the Travelers Aid Society of Springfield, Massachusetts. The city is an important railroad junction, and the society there last year dealt with almost 12,000 cases. Besides the large number of ordinary transients, there were DPs coming through from arrival in the port of Boston, and the military personnel at Westover Field, eight miles outside the city.

The Springfield society's executive secretary is Mrs. Marion Halket, a trim and dimpled woman of perhaps forty, with an easy laugh and a quick, purposeful stride. A graduate of the Connecticut College for Women at New London, she has a master's degree in social work from Western Reserve in Cleveland. Her husband is a local businessman who likes to chide her for her zeal (which makes a mockery of the theory of the eight-hour day) and professes to regard himself as no more than an unpaid chauffeur in the cause.

Mrs. Halket's headquarters are the Springfield railroad station: a grimy old barn which, like most other depots, looks as if its architect had had his mind on other things when he drew the plans for it. The society's setup in the station is the usual desk, known as the Goldfish Bowl, "right out in the middle of everything," and, in a quieter and more private location, an office where matters of greater moment can be conducted.

The desk is attended from eight thirty in the morning until nine thirty at night, and a worker's telephone number is available for emergency calls in the hours when the big white globe is dark. Like Travelers Aid groups in 41 other cities, the Springfield society also maintains a part-time service at the bus station. As is the case with other local societies serving airport cities, Springfield Travelers Aid finds it impracticable to operate a separate service at the airfield or the air-lines terminal, but plane passengers in need of help are put in touch with the society by air-lines personnel.

The society is directed by a board of 21 citizens, including two bankers, three lawyers, two members of the Junior League, a representative of the Catholic Women's Society, an executive of American Airlines, the passenger agent in the Springfield station, and the superintendent of the Boston and Albany Railroad. All of these were elected to the board, not because of any special position in the community but because of a personal interest and participation in the society's work. Most of them take active part in the actual operation of the society.

The Springfield agency is supported chiefly by funds donated locally through the community chest. It is also aided by admiring groups in the city—a private school, three churches, and a local school for deaf-mute children which holds rummage sales and sends the proceeds to Travelers Aid. There is also a small "pin-money fund," thoughtfully bequeathed to the society by a long-time volunteer worker, to meet any small need not covered by its formal budget.

The society's budget last year was $12,959, as compared with New York City's high of $332,443. The largest items in the Springfield budget were the salaries of full-time workers (average for executive secretaries in Travelers Aid is $4,000; case workers' salaries range upward from $2,800) and the costs of postage, telephone and telegrams. It provided a "revolving relief fund" of $300 which enabled the society to lend or give $1,167 to people who needed it; $967 of this was repaid. The local's "dues" to the National Travelers Aid Association came to $570, an assessment determined by three factors: the size of the community, its ability to pay, and the number of its residents aided during the preceding year by other societies in the network.

The volunteer workers on whom the society depends include, according to Mrs. Halket, the entire personnel of the railroad station. The Springfield railroad station boasts an impressive pool of interpreters right on the premises. The baggage-room staff alone, Mrs. Halket reports, is a veritable League of Nations.

In Travelers Aid work, apparently, nothing is considered unusual. Last year's Springfield clients included:

(1) A runaway thirteen-year-old girl posing as an eighteen-year-old with the questionable help of heavy lip rouge and a long, slinky black dress. The society, aided by three or four other local societies, found where she came from, determined why she had run away from home and talked her into going back.

(2) A Polish refugee woman who refused to close the door of the hotel room Travelers Aid got for her. They finally succeeded in convincing the terrified soul that it was not a gas chamber.

(3) A man who came looking for lodging and volunteered the information that he was on parole from a federal prison. He got a place to stay, a lead on a decent job, and a recharge of self-confidence.

(4) An elderly White Russian couple, bewildered because their daughter, living in New England, had not met their ship in New Orleans. Travelers Aid reassured them by producing the tickets and money that the daughter had sent to Springfield for them, and gave them a brief explanation of distances in America.

(5) A deaf-mute couple from the South, whose savings had been stolen from their rented room, leaving them stranded several hundred miles from home. The TAS in their home town reunited them with the husband's parents, at a cost to Springfield of one telegram.

(6) A man of ninety-eight, uneasy about traveling to Florida alone. Contacts with every train conductor and Travelers Aid society along the route made sure that he was in good hands every mile of the way.

(7) Seven hundred and four persons who needed, and got, small loans.

(8) A woman fleeing from imaginary Communist agents. Toward the end of the day she dashed a cup of tea from the tired Travelers Aid worker's hand because, she insisted, it was doped. Sanitarium attendants took her over, and the exhausted worker went home to have a cup of tea herself.

(9) A little European girl who had never had a doll of her own. One was purchased for her from the "pin-money fund."

(10) A woman who had come to Springfield to spend Christmas with her five-year-old nephew whose mother had died a few weeks before. The mother had promised the boy a puppy for Christmas. Travelers Aid combed the city, and the puppy was delivered at eight o'clock on Christmas morning with a red ribbon around its neck.

(11) The same old gentleman from upstate New York who once made an appearance in Springfield, too, and was returned to his hygienic family.

"I'm proud of you, dear! That was a very intelligent look you gave him when he asked your opinion of world affairs!"

COLLIER'S — JACK MENDELSOHN

Embarrassed Wife Runs Away

Of all the services performed by Travelers Aid societies last year, it is probable that none gave a greater satisfaction to its renderer than a certain 25-cent purchase handled by a Travelers Aid worker in New York's Pennsylvania Station.

A young woman from the Midwest had left her husband and children because of a shame that had grown too great for her to bear: She had never learned to read. One morning in the park, her small son had pointed to the inscription under an unfamiliar statue and asked, "What does that say?" Unable to give him an answer, she had run away.

Sometimes, she said, she thought of going back, but she was not sure that she was wanted. The Travelers Aid office at home quickly found that she was, very definitely, wanted. The husband deposited at that office her return fare, plus 25 cents for something he said was equally important.

That afternoon, when his wife came back to the desk in Penn Station, there were two things waiting for her: a ticket for home, and a single red rose. THE END

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The Schoolmistress

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

on her feet. "If the artist is the product and interpreter of his period . . ."

With a little smile on her lips Miss Rudd half listened, half followed her own thoughts.

Through the open window she could see the Junior School girls, hurrying back to lunch. The courts were crowded. When she had first come here as a pupil, nearly forty years ago, she had been one of sixty.

THE school had doubled since. New wings, new classrooms. But the view from this window across the playing fields was just the same. The whole feel of the place was just the same. In spite of all that the world had lived through in terms of two major wars, St. Catherine's had stayed itself. She was glad it had. Her whole life had been built round it.

Something had told her from the very start that she would never marry. She had never been much interested in boys nor they in her. St. Catherine's had been her home, her family, her faith. As a pupil she had slaved to win a scholarship at Oxford, so as to bring credit to the school. At Oxford she had slaved to get a degree, so that she could return to St. Catherine's as a mistress. Back on the staff, her one thought, her one ambition, had been to become its headmistress—*not just on selfish grounds but because she* loved the school. The ambition of forty years was within her grasp.

She returned her attention to the dais.

The first question had been answered. A second was being dealt with. The professor was beaming benignly on his audience. She could picture the compliments he would pay her afterward, the report he would be making to the governors.

The second girl had taken her seat. A third would be rising now, a tall dark girl, in contrast to June Barton, to ask a question about Trollope. "Was the present vogue for the Barchester novels a form of escapism?" Miss Rudd turned confidently in the girl's direction but to her surprise it was from the other side of the room that the question came. A very different question.

"You were saying, Professor, that D. H. Lawrence—"

Anxiously Miss Rudd swung round. A tall blond girl was on her feet. Lucy. Miss Rudd's anxiety grew sharper. Lucy: the last girl she would have chosen; far too forthright. So ready to flare up.

"You were saying, Professor, that D. H. Lawrence was one of the most important literary figures of the 1920s. Aren't I right in saying that before he was established he had a great deal of trouble with authority? Wasn't one of his novels suppressed?"

Miss Rudd squirmed in her chair. During the dozen years in which she had taken the Upper School, no girl had dared to ask a question on her own. Heaven knew what might happen next. Lucy's question was in itself well enough, but it had been delivered on an aggressive note.

"Yes," the professor was answering, "that's quite true. The Rainbow was suppressed in, let me see, the autumn of 1915."

"Isn't The Rainbow now admitted to be one of his better novels?"

"Yes, I would say it was."

"The police authorities made a mistake?"

"From one point of view, most certainly."

"What action did you take, Professor?"

"What action could I take?"

"You could have organized a protest."

The professor smiled.

"There are two things, my dear young lady, that I would ask you to remember. In the first place, the war was on. I was working in the Ministry of Munitions and was extremely busy. In the second place, the book had been suppressed. I could not obtain a copy. It was ten years before I had an opportunity to realize what kind of book had been suppressed."

There was a general laugh in which Miss Rudd joined. Her fears were almost lulled. The professor had got his laugh. But Lucy was still upon her feet. The girl turned and looked toward her mistress. In her eyes there was a look of challenge, of bravado, as though she were taking up a dare, then she turned back to the professor.

"An author very often finds himself in trouble. He is misunderstood, misjudged, attacked," she said. "Then when it's too late, it's recognized that the people who attacked him were in the wrong. In your long career, Professor, have you ever gone to the defense of a writer who was in trouble, when he needed help, or have you always waited till he was established or dead and it was safe to praise him?"

It was said calmly, coldly, almost vindictively. Then once again the girl turned back to face her schoolmistress. Her eyes were glowing, with revenge, with glutted triumph: as though in that one minute she had settled the score of every grievance, real and fancied, that she had sustained at school. It was an expression such as in twenty-five years of teaching Miss Rudd had never seen. She shuddered and her hands tightened on her chair. *In a single minute* the work of forty years had been destroyed.

She closed her eyes. She barely listened to the professor.

"You must remember," he was saying, "that I have a duty toward my public. Very often an author is so much ahead of his time that I should be as unjustified in recommending him to an audience, as I would be in offering a glass of neat brandy to a child. As I said, I did not have an opportunity of reading The Rainbow till the middle twenties, but if I had read it when it was published, I think I should have hesitated to recommend it. It contained ideas that might have been then too advanced."

He was suave, urbane, unruffled; the practiced turner of the other cheek. She scarcely listened. It did not matter; the harm was done. That wretched child. The work of forty years.

She had no illusions as to the kind of report that the professor would be making to the board. What would happen to her now? She faced her future. She was close on fifty. She would find it hard to work under someone several years her junior. She was too old to start again in another school.

AS THE class broke up, she made her way firmly toward the dais. She was resolved on one point, not to cringe. She must take her medicine.

"Perhaps you'll have time for a glass of sherry before you catch your train." . . .

There was a reflective, ruminative expression on his face as he sipped the wine. "I suppose you know," he said, "that your name is on the list of candidates to succeed Miss Forester."

So the medicine was coming then.

She nodded.

"I suppose you know also that you have quite powerful support, particularly from the old girls' section."

Again she nodded.

"But what I don't think you know is this:

Inviting Trouble

I find to my growing annoyance that I'm
Acquainted with characters who,
Invited to visit me any old time,
Do!

—RICHARD WHEELER

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that when the governors met last week, the chief opposition to your appointment came from me."

"From you?"

He smiled. "I'll be quite frank; I thought you were too old, or rather I thought you would be out of touch with the young idea. That's why I came down today. I wanted to see the kind of response I got from the class for which you were particularly responsible."

She made no answer, but her lips set tight. So she had been right; now he was going to find the appropriate gilding for the pill. Retirement with a pension; was that the offer?

"That's why I came down," he said. "And as a result of this morning's session I'm happy to be able to inform you that I'm withdrawing my opposition, unreservedly."

In a morning of sustained surprises, this was the most considerable. She stared, incredulous.

"I was afraid, as I said," he was continuing, "that you'd be out of touch with the new idea. But that girl who was so violent about D. H. Lawrence showed me just how wrong I was."

"You mean that Lucy—" she began, then checked herself. She was breathless, out of her depth, incapable of coherent thought.

He laughed. "I know what you're going to say. She was very rude. She almost lost her temper. I can imagine that she embarrassed you. But she showed independence. That's what I liked. The young should be rebellious. At least some should. There's plenty of time later to learn how to compromise. I have; I guess you have too. But I've had daughters, and I have granddaughters; they've kept reminding me that the young must be allowed their heads. One shouldn't crush personality. I liked the way that girl blazed out. If you'd been the kind of person I was half afraid you were, she'd not have dared to. I'm not only withdrawing my opposition, I'm giving my most warm support. I've no doubt how the voting'll go."

He held out his hand to her in congratulation. She took it but she could not speak. It was the proudest moment of her life. Yet she felt ashamed. She had won the prize, but under false pretenses. . . .

It was after lunchtime but she could not eat. Through the open windows she watched the girls, changed out of their school uniforms, hurrying to the tennis courts and swimming pool. Next term she would be their headmistress; next term and for the next ten years, they would be her charges; I'm a cheat, she thought, a cheat, a cheat. I'm not the person that he thought I was. And I ought to be. I ought.

A KNUCKLE tapped upon the door. Lucy. A very different Lucy from the girl who had blazed out at the professor: a timid frightened girl who realized she had gone too far, who had come to mitigate her punishment with an apology. Miss Rudd smiled wryly. The irony of the situation. To this girl's intervention she owed her post. Lucy had done everything she had been told not to do, and it had turned out exactly opposite. All those stage-managed questions, how futile they'd have been. And the professor was right, dead right. You couldn't, you shouldn't stamp out that rebel spirit.

"Please, I've come to say—" the girl said. But Miss Rudd checked her. She mustn't have the girl humiliate herself. She must put things right with Lucy; she must put things right with all the girls like Lucy that there'd be under her charge during the next ten years—the problem girls, the girls with chips upon their shoulders, the girls who were really too old to be at school; the girls who flared up suddenly.

"I'm so glad you've come," she said hesitantly. "I was going to send for you. I wanted to tell you that I've changed my mind. You can dine out with your brother and his friend on Wednesday."

Miss Rudd gathered courage from the look of amazement on the girl's face and went firmly on. "You are old enough, reliable enough to make your own decisions. I realized that this morning. I liked the way you spoke. So did the professor. You made a good point and you showed spirit. But think over what he said. He may be seventy, but he isn't an old fogy. Run along now, Lucy. I felt proud of you."

And that evening when she came into the hall, Miss Rudd found at her place, for the first time in twenty years, a bunch of roses. THE END

BUTCH

"Okay, Butch, get goin' an' drive like . . . Butch, Butch . . . !"

COLLIER'S — LARRY REYNOLDS

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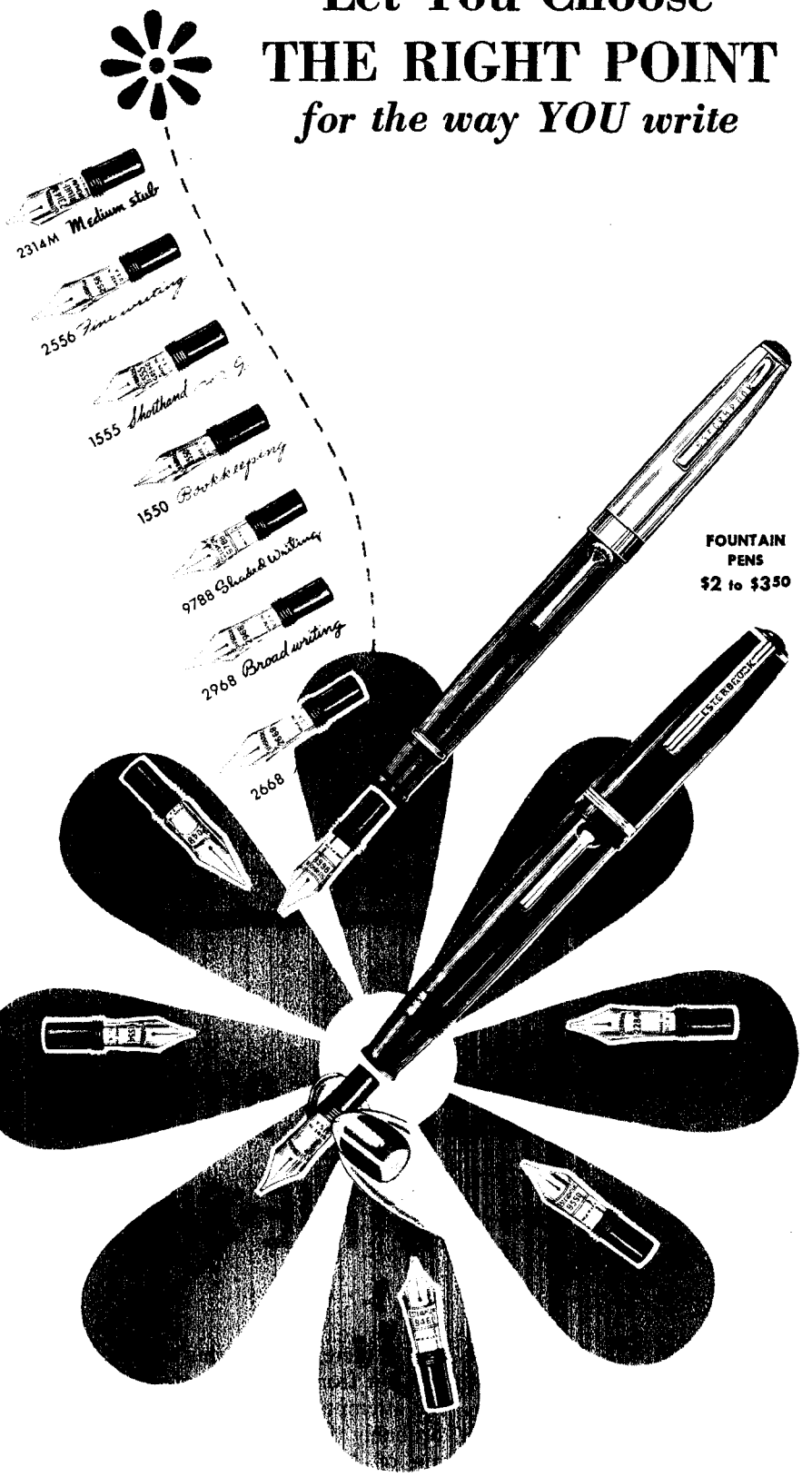

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HARRY DEVLIN

SNIFFING OUT THE SIN IN THE CINEMA

EVER SINCE PURITAN DAYS there have been periodic attempts to banish sin from our land by means of blue laws. The attempts have been uniformly unsuccessful, probably because it goes against the tough grain of American character to have some pious legislator define virtue and enforce it by statute. But successive failures haven't discouraged the sanctimonious solons. They're still at it.

You probably read about the latest sin-curbing proposal in last week's Collier's (You Can't See That Movie, by Lester Velie). Senator Johnson of Colorado would make the motion-picture industry as pure as Little Eva by requiring all players, directors, producers and distributors to be licensed by the federal government. Whether they kept those licenses would depend on their behavior in private life.

Now, this is quite a new concept of the licensing system. There are plenty of businesses and professions, from surgery to saloonkeeping, in which a person must meet official requirements or qualify for a license before he can open up shop. These licenses can also be revoked—but for business or professional misconduct rather than for what the licensee does on his own time.

Senator Johnson would change all this. He seems least concerned with what the movie people do during working hours. They might win Oscars for their performances or their products. Their business practices might be above reproach. But if any one of them had been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, or had even admitted "committing acts constituting the essential elements" of such a crime (whatever precisely that means), he'd have to find a new means of livelihood.

Mr. Johnson's proposal was unveiled in a speech before the Senate, a speech full of shocked indignation at the goings on of certain Hollywood celebrities, particularly Ingrid Bergman and Roberto Rossellini. One might have thought, from reading this impassioned denunciation, that they were the first couple who ever journeyed down the primrose path of dalliance, and that they had planned the journey as a personal affront to the senator.

Well, we have no desire to leap to the defense of this overpublicized pair. Miss Bergman's run-out on her small daughter was a dirty trick in anybody's book. But we do think that Senator Johnson's effort to create a spotless morality in Hollywood by legislative fiat is bluenosed presumption.

First, it brings up the old and general question: Who is to play the censor, and by what right? Mr. Johnson said the purpose of his licensing system would be to "eliminate persons of low character from making and appearing in films." But just who is a "person of low character"? What is the special wisdom of Senator Johnson or the whole Congress that can define this general description fairly and accurately, and safely enact the definition into law?

And why pick only on Hollywood? If it is proper for an actor or actress to be denied the right to work because of private transgressions, then it must be proper to deny the same right to lawyers, dentists, osteopaths and all other licensed workers for the same offenses.

We are inclined to think that Hollywood gets undue credit for its contribution to the nation's moral delinquency. Some of its residents certainly have too much money, too much publicity and too little sense of responsibility. But the movie colony did not invent the sordid adventure or the broken home.

There are about 100,000 illegitimate babies born in this country every year. (Those are pre-Bergman statistics.) Some 400,000 divorces are granted to Americans in the same period. It is doubtful that those figures would change much if Congress outlawed movie making tomorrow.

Hollywood is already subjected to a lot of censorship and pressure, official and otherwise, which too frequently is reflected in the movies we see. We believe the threat of further censorship by Congress would simply lower the quality of Hollywood's end product without improving the morals of the people who make the pictures or of the people who see them.

The only sensible and democratic censorship is individual discrimination. If you disapprove of the behavior of an actor or director or producer, you can stay away from his pictures. If enough people feel as you do and follow your example, the effect of your disapproval will be felt. Hollywood is very sensitive in the region of the box office. And it never fails to look for a remedy when that sensitive region is injured.

NO FUEL RATIONS

TWO WISE MEN of the University of Wisconsin (animal husbandry department) have discovered that it just ain't healthy for pigs to eat coal. That seems too bad, for most pigs we've met were real fond of bituminous hors d'oeuvres. But the pigs might as well be philosophical about it. Even if science hadn't restricted their diet, they were bound to run up against John L. Lewis sometime or other. So the way we figure it, the pigs eventually would have had to convert to corn, anyway.

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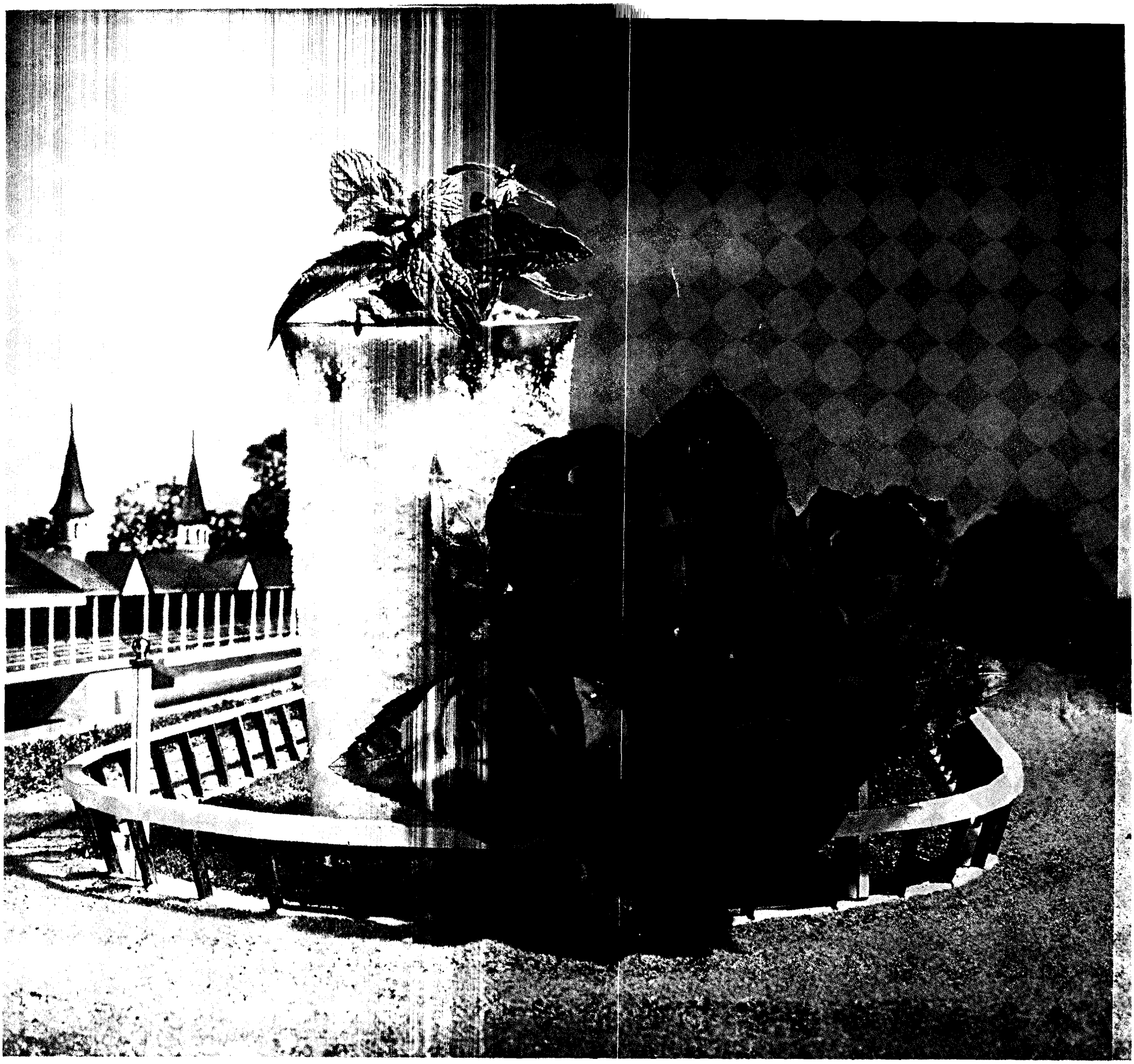

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